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1840.

TWELVE SERMONS

DELIVERED IN THE

NEW TEMPLE OF THE ISRAELITES,

At Hamburgh;

BY

DR. GOTTHOLD SALOMON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

ANNA MARIA GOLDSMID.

LONDON:

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

I HAVE two objects in offering the following translation to the public. The first, and of itself sufficient motive, is the hope of being useful to such of my co-religionists as are unacquainted with the German, and therefore unable to avail themselves of the varied sources of religious instruction which a knowledge of that language opens to its readers. My father, who has acted, both in public and private, on the opinion that religious education can be best conducted at home, shares with me this hope. In that home-instruction I have found, and think that others will find, these discourses conducive to the attainment of clear and comprehensive views of the Mosaic faith. To all who are engaged in

the formation of the religious character of the young, but above all to mothers, whose especial vocation it is, diligently and lovingly to foster true piety in the hearts of their children, everything must be valuable, that can assist them in the fulfilment of this, their most important duty. To mothers and instructors, then, I especially offer such aid as these sermons can furnish. I have selected twelve from many published by one of the most learned, able, and eloquent teachers in Germany, in that land of profound Hebrew historians, scholars, and theologians. I have not selected them because they were superior to any others as compositions, but because they appeared to me to embrace the whole circle of our highest religious and moral obligations.

I have a second and a secondary motive for their publication—the hope, that from their perusal, many of my christian countrymen may derive a better knowledge than they previously possessed, of the actuating faith of the Jew. Until a recent period, when general attention has been in some degree directed to the subject, we were scarcely aware of the amount and extent of ignorance that prevailed as to the real tenets of the Israelite, of the

misconceptions that had been formed, concerning the duties enjoined on us by the Mosaic code. Of the erroneous opinions that have been lately, on more than one occasion, publicly expressed, the best refutation may be found in writings, whose direct object is, not the correction of such misconceptions, but the religious and moral instruction of the sons and daughters of Israel. To such writings, and to these Sermons among the number, I confidently ask the attention of the kindly and conscientious Christian. I may add, that many of them will be found available for persons of every religious denomination and sect.

If, in religious discussion, men of all creeds would seek, not points of difference, but points of agreement, how much of the strife and bitterness that deform God's earth, would disappear—mutual ignorance it is, that but too often produces mutual alienation. Let us seek, then, to know each other, let us all strive after that knowledge, in the same spirit in which we strive after the knowledge of God, that we may better imitate Him in the universality of our charity, of our love; that we may be instruments in His hands, of the accomplishment of the glorious prophecy that "The know-

ledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea," when "The Lord shall be One, and His name One." A. M. G.

Regent's Park, London,
June, 1839.

*** The translator is indebted to Professor Hurwitz, for the corrected English version of the scriptural quotations.

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SERMON I.

THE PATH OF LIGHT.

Delivered on the Feast of Weeks.

ISAIAH II. 5.

בֵּית יַעֲקֹב לְכוּ וְנֵלְכָה בְּאוֹר יְהוָה

HOUSE OF JACOB, COME, LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD.

THE morning shines forth on us in beauty; the sun bathes us in his ocean of rays: he is glorious to behold when he cometh forth in his majesty from his bridal chamber, which the Lord hath appointed unto him in the blue firmament of heaven. Yet, wait but a moment, and thick vapours obscure him; the eye of man then seeks him in vain; he hides his countenance in a thick veil of clouds.

But there is one sun of far greater beauty and glory. He who has once beheld that brighter sun never again loses him: for him whom he has once illumined, that sun will never again set. Clouds obscure not his crown of rays; he shines in the darkest night. His light penetrates the heart, and when the heart is dead, still he shineth on! Ye know, my friends, of what I speak. There, in that land, on which the eye of the Lord ever rested, there, above the mountain which he chose for his dwelling-

place, first arose this bright and glorious sun. On Sinai (also called Horeb), thousands of years past, a flame was kindled that sheds warmth and light even unto this day; a fountain was made to spring, out of which ye, my people, first drew, still draw, and will continue to draw until the end of days, the waters of life. There gushed forth a source—a source inexhaustible, unfathomable, as He who caused it to flow. "HOUSE OF JACOB, COME, LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD."

This day we solemnise the holy birth-day of our divine religion. If thou celebratest the birth-day of an earthly joy, and givest thanks unto the Lord that it has been granted unto thee, a joy that endureth not, but passeth speedily away, how must thou rejoice in thy heart on this day, on which *heavenly joy* was born unto thee, that remaineth unto thee, and thy children, and thy children's children, now and for evermore. If the restored sick thank the Lord with tearful eye for renewed health, for once more breathing freely in the rosy light of existence,—though that breath may again falter, that light be again speedily quenched,—how unspeakable will be his gratitude, if a heavenly, an immortal life, an eternal light has become his portion, that lights him as a *sun of mercy* on his course through the devious paths and obscure wanderings of his earthly being. O rejoice then, congregation of the Lord! praise him for the light of religion and of the law, that beamed on you early, and will beam on you in the latter days.

But let us celebrate this birth-day of religion, in a manner worthy of our God, worthy of our nature. Unto

us, my brothers and sisters, must this celebration be matter of especial rejoicing, for it is the first *feast of weeks, or* שבעות, *the first feast of light,* which we have solemnised in our own sanctuary. Let us then come into his presence witn softened feelings, and render unto him thanks more fervent than in the years that are past!

"HOUSE OF JACOB, COME, LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD!" Thus do I call upon you, in the words of the prophet Isaiah; for with these words begins his second discourse. But let us now attentively enquire, in a manner worthy of reasonable men, of God-loving Israelites,—First, *What is that which the prophet calls the light of the Lord?* Secondly, *Where does this light of the Lord shine forth most brightly?*

Light, my friends, is synonomous with *reason.* Without light we should grope in eternal obscurity, even in the most beaten path. Without reason, without this fountain of light, we should be incapable of perceiving in all things what is good or evil, true or false. If, then, God calleth upon us to *walk in his light,* He calleth upon us to seek to know Him and His holy word according to reason and truth; to meditate and search for light upon the matters most important to us,—upon our destiny, our duties, our view of the future, our relation to our fellow-men, and to our Creator *himself.* To seek after truth, to see with our own eyes, to allow to the reason the exercise of its powers and rights, will bring us near unto the Lord, and enable us to behold Him in *his light.* To this goal we are all to approach: the whole *house of Jacob,* says our

text, should be led towards this goal; we should combat pernicious errors and prejudices; we should correct false representations and opinions; we should oppose superstition and fanaticism, in order that there be *day* within us and around us,—in order that we may *walk in the light of the Lord.* To walk in the light of the Lord, to use our reason in the examination of His word, we term *enlightenment—religious enlightenment.* Doubtless, my friends, you have often heard *religious* enlightenment lauded by some of our co-religionists as the greatest blessing granted to man; and we have all in truth ourselves experienced the good and cheering results which this heavenly gift has produced. But are you not aware that others of our brethren, shudder and recoil at the mention of its name? Are you not aware that this portion of our community regard enlightenment as a disturber of peace; as the deadly foe of religion? Whence does it arise that one and the same thing can be so differently judged and treated? that one sees light where another beholds nought but darkness, which is to him, as to the lisping child, an object of terror? Whence does it arise, my brethren, that *one* feels the *blessing* of heaven, where another fears the *curse* of *hell?* Whence does it arise that one considers this enlightenment as the herald of evil, another, of good?

We must seek to solve this question; and, for this purpose, we must examine more closely the meaning of the word *enlightenment.* This word, my friends, applied first to objects in the *material* world, is now adapted to abstract ideas. It signifies a clearing up to our sight and our sense of that which was previously obscure and

confused. When the dark clouds part, and the blue firmament is no longer hidden from our sight, we say *the sky clears up.* A human being whose inward heaven is obscured and overcast, in whose mind confusion prevails, in whose intellect false and true notions are mingled, and who is subsequently enabled by means of wise instruction to separate the true from the false, and who ceases to be enveloped in the mists of error—that man is *enlightened.* Heaven has opened unto him the portals of day, and light and heat pervade the previous domain of night, at the call of reason:—*Let there be light —Light was!*

Religious enlightenment consists, then, in the correcting and fixing of our opinions on all matters which are connected with our religion, in the purifying our belief, and in freeing it from the additions heaped on it by pernicious fanaticism and silly prejudices, in forcing on us the conviction that true religion is not a matter of memory, but the *occupier* of the *heart;* religious enlightenment relieves our spirit from *slavish dread* of worldly rulers; it points out to us the true end of our existence, and the true relation in which we stand to our Creator, and teaches us, that to serve our brother, is to serve God; to love our brother, is also to love our Heavenly Father. It teaches us, that a pure and true faith leads men by the cords of love, and bids us not to raise the sword of vengeance against those whose belief differs from ours, if they do but right, and fulfil their duties. It teaches us to seek to imitate our Heavenly Father, who embraces all creation with the bond of love, who presses them fast to His parental

heart, on which each of His children may pour out alike joy and sorrow, and there seek eternal repose. It teaches us, that between our future and our present being, there exists the closest connection—that the former is but a continuation of the latter,—that the degree of advancement which we reach here, will determine our position in the world to come; and that he who voluntarily disregards the object of his existence while on earth, must not expect acceptance in heaven.

In this glorious garb of light, religious enlightenment appears, to every sound heart, to every healthy eye; and yet many of our brothers and sisters shun it wholly and entirely.

We will examine their objections. "How can you permit in religious matters," say they, "reason to decide? You would make *her* your guide, who is so short-sighted and circumscribed." "O my brethren, we reply, How easy is it to conceal folly in the mantle of modesty and piety! How, because Reason has limits and cannot see *all*, shall she be *totally* unemployed?" The light of God will then be unavailing! If this objection be seriously made, then you should shut your eye and close your ear; for at some distance the one sees, and the other hears, but imperfectly, and, with farther removal, not at all. Would you, therefore, be blind and deaf? Have you not observed how much the power, both of eye and ear, increases *by use?* Have you not marked how the infant *learns* gradually to see? Do you not know that your eye sees those objects most correctly which are the most frequently presented to it? And yet your reason

must not be exercised. "In the paths of wisdom is happiness," saith Solomon unto his brethren: * "SAY UNTO WISDOM, THOU ART MY SISTER; AND CALL UNDERSTANDING THY FRIEND," he continues. Will you, then, most neglect her who is so important unto you, your *sister*, your *friend?* Shall the reproach of the prophet fall upon you? "FOR MY PEOPLE IS FOOLISH, THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN ME; THEY ARE SOTTISH AND UNWISE CHILDREN, AND NOT OF UNDERSTANDING: THEY ARE WISE TO DO EVIL, BUT KNOW NOT HOW TO DO GOOD." †

"But," continue the opponents of enlightenment, "look what fruit enlightenment produces! What monsters follow in its train! *Scepticism—sensuality—folly*—the most holy is ridiculed: the boy exalts himself above the old man: the son censures the father, and looks down with contempt upon his actions; the closest family ties are loosened, and parents and children live in animosity and disunion. They begin with the unimportant, and go on to all that is most essential; and thus do they proceed, from corruption to corruption, until the whole fabric of religion lies in ruins before our eyes!"

What shall we reply to these accusations? Do they not appear to be well-founded? and do they not reduce us to silence? Have we not ourselves come in contact with men who, priding themselves on their enlightenment, term this establishment where youth and age are taught, and where we seek to raise our thoughts in pious

* Proverbs vii. 4. † Jeremiah iv. 22.

devotion to heaven, a *retrograding* step—to whom it appears (to use a mild expression, for let me not utter their thoughts) to whom, I say, it appears *strange* and inconsistent with reason to worship God. Yes; if such opinions are the result of enlightenment, then those of our brethren are indeed in the right, who maintain that we ought still to wander blindly in our path of night. But no, no; those who thus speak are *wanting* in *enlightenment;* they are wanting in clear apprehension, they are wanting in the power to distinguish between truth and falsehood, the immaterial and the material, they are wanting in all the lovely qualities which true enlightenment must develope. What these term *enlightenment*, is the *love* of *ease, a disposition to sensuality, selfishness, ill-digested erudition*, drawn from impure sources, *pride, self-interest, error*, and *darkness.* Hence the notion appears to them ridiculous, that there should be something transcendent, something beyond the reach of their senses; yes, that what is invisible, should be more powerful and more glorious than what is visible. What they cannot see and hear, and taste and handle, is to them of little worth. The enlightenment of which *they* speak, should serve to make life agreeable. What did they? Ancient and venerable ordinances were rejected; even the most beneficial religious emotions were ridiculed, as if they were unnecessary to their belief, as though they were so full of the spiritual, that they needed the spiritual alone. Sensuality began to take the place of reason, and what was not in accordance with it, was rejected, dismissed; for they regulated, as one of the wise men of old beautifully and truly says, when speaking of a similar class, *they regulated their un-*

*derstanding according to their desires, and not their desires according to their understanding.**

And this they called, with proud self-sufficiency, *enlightenment.* Priding themselves on this error, they sought to ridicule every thing that they could not feel with their hands, and see with their eyes. Infidelity, with its thousand evils, was the inevitable consequence of this imperfect cultivation, this spurious enlightenment, which neither contains nor produces aught divine.

As it often occurs here below, the pure suffered with the impure, I mean, pure true enlightenment was, to the unthinking many, synonymous with irreligion. The mere name became an object of suspicion, and many a hypocrite contributes to maintain this error, and to denounce the bright pillar of light which should guide us on our way through the pathless desert of life, as a column of raging fire, threatening to consume our moral fabric.

But, my beloved friends, is light then indeed pernicious, because the unpractised hand of the suckling knows not its use? Is truth injurious, because it is misused by fools? Shall the sun not warm, the rain not refresh the earth, because the poisonous plant grows near the "herb that is food for man?" Is *enlightenment* to be rejected, because the frivolous understand not its aim and end? No! ye shall learn to distinguish, by their characteristics, true and false enlightenment. Thee,

* הרשעים מושכים את השכל אחר תואתם והצדיקים מושכים את תואתם אחר השכל (מדרש)

O Holy One! I recognise, in that thou makest the race of man more virtuous, more humane, more truth-loving, more moderate, more modest, more indulgent to the faults of others, more watchful over their own defects! Thou rejectest not what is old and worthy of reverence: thou snatchest not, child-like, at the new: thou seekest only to distinguish what is hurtful and offensive to God and man, and to place in its stead what is worthier and more beneficial. Zeal without understanding, faith without virtue, piety without philanthropy, such dwell not in thy sight, such canst thou not endure. How differently does thy sister manifest herself! Proudly she lifts her head on high above all who will not follow after her: she renders her adherents more frivolous, more unprincipled, more selfish, and more immodest and immoderate in their demands. Without inquiry, they reject the old, be it ever so venerable, ever so sacred, and blindly seize on what is new, be it ever so pernicious and unholy, only because it glitters and sparkles and dazzles.

We know her now, this false one; and she shall be banished from the midst of us. We will seek to avoid and escape her snares; for of her it is said: "THE WAY OF THE WICKED IS DARKNESS, THEY KNOW NOT AT WHAT THEY STUMBLE:" but of true enlightenment, "THE PATH OF THE JUST IS AS THE LIGHT, THAT CONTINUES TO SHINE TILL THE PERFECT DAY."* Of the false it is said; "THE LAMP OF THE WICKED SHALL BE PUT OUT:" of the true; "THE LIGHT OF THE RIGHTEOUS REJOICETH."†

* Proverbs iv. 18, 19. † Ibid. xiii. 9.

"HOUSE OF JACOB, COME, LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD." The *light* of the *Lord* is *religion*, called by the pious men of former ages, in their writings and discourses, the *light of the World*. A perfect understanding which should guide us unerringly through the maze of life, and enable us, on all occasions, to resist the temptations to vice, has never yet, my friends, been vouchsafed to mortal. Our obscure path must be illumined by a brighter light, that can never be extinguished: and this light—there is none other, my beloved, save the religion given us for a guide by God; *the knowledge of God and of his holy will*—it must fill our whole heart in every situation in life: it must be the meridian sun which casts his rays on the cold scenes of our earthly career. "THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH. I HAVE SWORN AND WILL PERFORM IT, THAT I WILL KEEP THY RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS:"* thus exclaims *the royal Psalmist, the godly man;* and thus will we, like him, exclaim this day, the day on which our forefathers uttered for us the glorious vow—"ALL THAT THE LORD HAS COMMANDED US, WILL WE DO. HOUSE OF JACOB, COME, LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD." But if the religion which has been granted to us as Israelites, be really a *light* unto us, it ought to illumine, to warm, to bless, and to vivify. We will convince ourselves whether or not it is fitted to accomplish these ends.

The religion of the Israelites illumines. Into how many errors did unaided human reason fall, when the nature of God and of his operations was the subject of its

* Psalm cxix. 105.

inquiries? How much that was extravagant did it originate! What notions were conceived of the Invisible! Under what forms was He represented! *God himself became a light unto us;* and our eyes were opened, and were enlightened. He declared himself as an *eternal Being, the Originator and Creator of all that is; who speaketh, and it is done; who commandeth, and his word is fulfilled—as He who called forth the universe out of nothing—out of confusion, order; out of chaos, light—as a Being that orders and connects the parts and the whole—as a Being possessed of the most perfect understanding, the most comprehensive wisdom—as a Being incorporeal and indestructible, invisible to the material eye, visible only to the spirit of man.* What a glorious light! From unaided reason it would have remained, did remain, long entirely hidden!—but in the word of God it shines forth: there seek and find it!

The religion of the Israelites illumines.

Did not the wisest grope in darkness? Did not they conceive absurdities, even when man and his fate were the subject of their inquiries? For what purpose is he here? What is his destination? Why is he, on the one hand, so great, only a little lower than the angels; on the other, so insignificant, like a flower of the field;—so exalted, so lowly—so rich, so poor—a worm, a god? The Lord himself caused his light to shine, and shows man what he is, and what is his destiny. He is created in the image of God; he must seek, in his actions, to take God as his model; he must fight and conquer; must be attacked, and not submit, but overcome. He is purposely

placed low, that he may, by his own efforts and strength, climb the ladder of which the foot rests on earth, but of which the summit reaches unto heaven. What a light on our obscure path! From unaided reason it would have remained, did remain, long hidden; but in the *Word of God* it shines forth: there seek and find it.

The religion of the Israelites warms.

That God is great and all-powerful, philosophers and sages imagined before the divine light of our law shone forth; but the human heart remained cold, and felt in itself no point of contact and union with so exalted a being. It received warmth when God himself pointed out the relation in which He standeth towards us, in which we are placed towards Him. "*I am your Father,*" He saith unto us; "*Ye are children of the Eternal, your God.*" How high did His heart then beat for us; how high did our hearts beat for Him: how did the hearts of father and children glow for each other! Until then, we had been as orphans in a strange land, where no love was;—at once the world became unto us as a *parent's* dwelling, as our home, where we may, as often as it seemeth good unto us, approach unto our Father, rejoice in our Father, and be received by our Father! Until then, there was wanting unto us a model which we could imitate with a perfect trust. God's greatness and *power* alone would have thrown us in terror prostrate before him; but then we heard *His* voice, we saw him reflected in His *light:* He declared unto us that He was *great and powerful, but also full of mercy, grace, and compassion; of infinite love and truth, a being who showeth mercy unto the*

thousandth generation; who hath no respect of persons, who defendeth the cause of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and giveth unto them food and raiment. Does not your heart beat high for such a God? Is not its every pulsation one of love, when such a God calls unto thee? 'Turn thou unto Me, be thou rich or poor, happy or unhappy, master or servant, widow or orphan! In me thou wilt find a parent's heart, that knows and understands thee.' And this he hath said unto you. Reason, unaided reason, heard not this appeal; but in God's word it is written—there seek and find it! My sister, my brother! therein wilt thou find a model which thou must strive to follow with all thy might; which thou *canst* imitate.

The religion of the Israelites warms.

Thou canst love fervently, truly, and with all thy soul, one object only; for one object only can thy heart glow; to one alone can thy heart entirely belong. If true love is divided among many, it is feeble and wanting in life's energy. How long did the people of the earth believe in and *fear* several deities? They could not love them, even if the lips declared it: they uttered falsehoods. Then the Lord declared unto us, through the mouth of his servants, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God, the Lord is One"—One only, in heaven and in earth! There is no God beside Him: to Him alone can thy heart belong; to Him alone thy love.

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God—because He is one only, because thou needest not divide thy love—*with*

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. All thy powers belong unto Him; thou canst dedicate them unto Him, to Him in all situations of life, to Him when He giveth, to Him when He taketh away, to Him in life, to Him in death! Does not thy heart warm when thy Father speaketh thus unto thee? When He calleth on thee to love Him thus, how must He love thee! O how fair, how pleasant, art thou, O love! do I say unto you in the words of the Song of Songs, LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH, ITS GLOW THE GLOW OF FIRE, THE FLAME OF GOD. MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE, NEITHER CAN THE FLOODS DROWN IT. I AM MY BELOVED'S, AND MY BELOVED IS MINE.*

And because He belongeth unto us, as we do unto Him, the religion of the Israelite renders happy. A God who commandeth us thus to love Him, who thus loveth us, cannot desire that His children should hate and persecute each other, and transform into a desert the lovely dwelling-place He has appointed unto them. In His light we are to love Him, love those whose Father He is. Thus doth the word of God call upon us, "LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF." And in order to preserve us from the error of supposing that they who walk exactly in the same path as ourselves in the light of the Lord, are alone worthy of the name of neighbour, are alone worthy of love, the same parental voice speaketh thus unto us; ALSO THE STRANGER WHO IS NOT OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL (*not of thy faith*), LOVE HIM ALSO AS THYSELF. He is a man as thou art, created in the image

* Cant. viii. 6, 7; vi. 3.

of God like thyself. Is not a religion that thus teaches, O my brother, calculated to *render thee happy?*

The religion of the Israelites blesses.

A God who calleth on us to love him with all our hearts, cannot have created us for perdition. He can have placed man, the masterpiece of creation, upon earth, only for happiness. O how long in this respect, also, did unaided human reason blindly err! By how many nations, by how many philosophers of antiquity, was the being they called God considered as a malicious spirit, delighting in mischief, to whom (what blind infatuation!) the permanent happiness of man was repugnant. God Himself then declared unto us that He rejoiceth in us, and in doing good unto us; that in all which He commandeth us to do, He seeketh only to promote our happiness. He forbiddeth us not to partake of innocent joys. He commandeth us not to devote our days to gloom and sorrow. No, our whole life shall be *one* joy in him, before him, because other pleasures degrade and enslave man: but we shall not be slaves; we shall walk freely in the presence of our God. This is written in the law of our God; thou canst find it in His holy word.

Yes, the religion of the Israelites blesses as the light. In darkness a light illumines thee. In the gloomy scenes of life, the light, the law of the Lord, illumines thee, blesses thee. Here Innocence weeps: her very virtue, peradventure, is the cause of her misfortune: there guilt smiles in derision, and lifts its head proudly on high: Folly conquers while Wisdom becomes dumb.

Wickedness shoots forth like the weed of the field, and justice is trodden under foot. The purest, brightest hopes are frustrated: the devices of the cruel are fulfilled. Your hearts are anxious as to what would be the fate of those belonging to you, should you be called away from them, or they be removed far from you;—all dark riddles, for the solution of which, reason can use sophistry alone. But does this sophistry console and bless you? Listen then again to the voice of your Father in His Word: listen to what he declares:—

I am He who ordaineth all things,
I am just and full of compassion,
Trust in me, for gloriously will I accomplish it.

Does not this tranquillise your heart, strengthen your spirit? Does not your soul feel itself blessed in this assurance? At once a light is kindled for you!

The religion of the Israelite vivifies.

It animates and restores the weary, the dying! If you, O men, dust as ye are, blinded and confused by the violence of your passions, quit the paths of righteousness, follow evil ways, wander in darkness, and stifle the voice of goodness within you—religion calls upon you, "*Awake, live anew! Turn from the miry paths of sin, walk again in the sunny ways of virtue. Your Father above will again receive you.*" See, my brethren, this law we owe to the voice of God alone. We behold Him in the light of his divine religion a loving Father, who will pardon all sinners if they but throw themselves anew on His parental heart. "He

FORGIVETH ALL THINE INIQUITIES, AND HEALETH ALL THY DISEASES. THE LORD IS MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, SLOW TO ANGER AND GREAT IN MERCY. HE HATH NOT DEALT WITH US AFTER OUR SINS; NOR REWARDED US ACCORDING TO OUR INIQUITIES. AS FAR AS THE EAST IS FROM THE WEST, SO FAR HATH HE REMOVED OUR TRANSGRESSIONS FROM US."* Should not this animate you, children of earth? If ye have been so miserable as to stumble, to fall—despair not, repentant spirits. Raise your eyes to your Father; He will heal you, He will re-assure you.

Yes, the religion of the Israelites animates. When you have terminated your earthly career, and your heart has ceased to beat, it saith unto that heart, Live anew, a life without end, a life with the eternal Father of light and truth. You are created in God's image: as such ye cannot be destined to eternal annihilation. Verily it saith unto you, There is a future; the thread of your life cannot be cut off.

The troubled spirit is seldom strengthened by the suggestions of unaided reason respecting the world beyond the grave: but when God Himself calleth on you in His light, you can no longer fear death; you live awakened by His voice, His light.

And the whole house of Jacob shall walk in this light, that *illumines*, *warms*, *blesses*, and *animates*. High and low, great and small, father and son, mother and daugh-

* Psalm ciii.

ter, all shall learn to know God in the light of his heavenly law, and none shall walk in error and night. All, all shall behold light in his light; each shall seek to remove far from him every impure and unholy thing, every thing that is unworthy of the dignity of man, every thing unworthy of an Israelite illumined by the light of his God. All, all shall work for one end. Our schools, our synagogues, our dwellings shall be as single rays which shall meet in one bright focus; *To exercise virtue and righteousness in all their purity, to walk now and henceforth in the presence of our God, our spirit full of light, and our heart full of love.* And when the silver cord of life is loosed on earth, on Thy heart it shall be made fast for eternity; O, Thou Light and Redeemer of Israel! Bestow on us Thy light, Thy truth to guide us, to bring us near unto Thy sanctuary. Let Thy countenance shine upon this congregation: dispel the mists which here and there obscure the minds of Thy children. May light arise to the pious, and joy to the faithful. May the righteous rejoice in the Lord, and praise His holy name, now and for evermore! *Amen.*

SERMON II.

THE PROPHET'S SPIRIT AND PROPHET'S COURSE.

PROVERBS xvii. 3.

SILVER IS TRIED IN THE CRUCIBLE, GOLD IN THE FURNACE, BUT MAN BY WHAT HE PRAISES.

IF it be your desire, my friends, to become thoroughly acquainted with individuals whom you value, or who are important to you, yet with whom you have little intercourse, and whose conduct and proceedings you have little opportunity of observing,—if you would know them without deceit or guile, mark well the wishes they express; and from these it will be manifest, what is their peculiar character; they will often thus unconsciously disclose to you their whole being; and you will obtain a deep insight into their mind and heart. First, listen to the wishes which unguardedly pass men's lips: how one desires repose, another action; one superabundance, the other moderate competence; how one would see all mankind surrounded by mist and darkness, another by light; how one wishes a rapid progress in the domain of arts and sciences, another improvements in the world of religion and morals;—then go and observe closely those who have expressed these wishes, and you will find that

in them they have represented themselves, and that their actions and conduct stand in close relation to their desires; you will then fully comprehend the passage, "SILVER IS TRIED IN THE CRUCIBLE, GOLD IN THE FURNACE, BUT MAN BY WHAT HE PRAISES."

Not only our contemporaries, but also past generations are reflected in their wishes. Tell us the wishes of such men as are termed great and worthy, but whose greatness and worthiness we doubt, and you have placed in our hands the surest index to a knowledge of their hearts and characters. We shall soon cease to doubt of what they sought to do, and of what they really accomplished; we shall find the maxim confirmed, "SILVER IS TRIED IN THE CRUCIBLE, GOLD IN THE FURNACE, BUT MAN BY WHAT HE PRAISES."

Besides, if those whose peculiar qualities we wish to know, lived in periods so remote, that their mode of life and action must, from the long interval which separates us from them, remain unknown to us, and it be thence impossible for us to become thoroughly acquainted with their innermost being, as manifested in their works and actions—because we cannot know how much the circumstances of the period may have influenced their conduct, we cannot know whether they would not have acted differently, if Providence had permitted them to live in another age—in such cases, I say, men's wishes speak more certainly and distinctly than their deeds. Their actions are frequently not their own, but their desires spring from their hearts and minds; their actions are limited by the period of which they are the fruit, but

their wishes are not necessarily checked and determined by the time. Yes, verily, "SILVER IS TRIED IN THE CRUCIBLE, GOLD IN THE FURNACE, BUT MAN BY WHAT HE PRAISES."

And in the present hour, a comprehensive wish will give us an insight into the soul of a man, closely connected with us, and with the rest of mankind, but who has never yet been duly known and understood. You will find in this wish ample food for reflection. In the fourth book of Moses, chap. xi. ver. 29, it is expressed in the original as follows:—

וּמִי יִתֵּן כָּל־עַם יְהוָה נְבִיאִים כִּי יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־רוּחוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם׃

"WOULD GOD, THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM."

Few words! much meaning! A heart full of love, an understanding full of light, the welfare of all mankind, all are told in this single wish. The world would have assumed a goodlier aspect, had this wish been long since fulfilled; it would be better for our generation were its accomplishment at hand. All that is good, beautiful, true, great, and exalted, would be more justly recognised, more sincerely loved, more zealously promoted. All that is ignoble and impure, all that is offensive to the mind and the heart, would be hated, rejected, and banished; healthfulness and purity, without and within, would be sought after and attained; sin, ignorance, disorder, error, strife, war, misery, and want would

disappear from among men—men of one race, of one family, of one calling; men who had all become Prophets of the Lord. Let us first learn the occasion of this wish, then examine the wish itself, and, finally, the conditions by which it may be realised. Aid us, O God, to seek and to find; put Thy spirit upon us, in order that we may all discern the way in which the servants of Thy word, Thy prophets, must walk, if they would behold Thee face to face! O Father, our eyes are raised unto Thee; let not thy children seek Thee in vain! *Amen.*

WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM. This is the remarkable answer given by Moses, the man of God, when Joshua required his gifted master to interrupt the public teachings of the men Eldad and Medad, upon whom the spirit of the Lord had come down, and who were prophesying to the people in the camp, and seeking to cast upon others the light which shone upon them. My Lord, Moses, forbid them, said the young disciple, who feared lest it should become too light in the camp, and among the people. But Moses, who was more enlightened than any man upon earth, answered, "ENVIEST THOU FOR MY SAKE? WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS," that the holy spirit of understanding and truth were poured out upon every human being,—upon men and women, sons and daughters, old men and young men, upon man-servants and maid-servants.

In all times there have been narrow spirits who have considered it to be dangerous to instruct and enlighten

the people on matters the most important to them. They held the selfish opinion, (and many still hold it,) that a troop of blind are more easily led than a body of clear-sighted men. Hence they maintained that the knowledge given to the people should be as limited as possible,—that their mental powers should remain unemployed, their conceptions undeveloped, in order that they might assume no higher position than the beasts of the field, and thus remain longer passive tools in the hands of those who presume to degrade the people, by using them as means to unworthy ends. In consequence of these views, many nations never awakened to a sense of their dignity as human beings, and never were that, which they could and would have become. History is also, herein, the tribunal of the world. But no man could entertain such a wish, on whom the spirit of the Lord had so often rested,—to whom the Lord had shewn all His glory, had communicated all His goodness; no man who had learned to know God in all his greatness, and man in all his dignity. He embraced all his brethren with heart and soul; his people shall first of all learn, and then teach others to see, hear, feel, think and understand. If they are *all* children of *one* God, they shall *all* acknowledge *one* God; if they are all created in God's image, they shall *all* likewise seek to comprehend, guard, improve, develope, and perfect that image; if they are *all* endowed with mind and heart, they shall *all* think and feel;—they shall not remain children, who must be led, step by step, but they shall grow in the knowledge of God,—they shall go forward with him, and in him, further and further. WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE

LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM. His whole soul is told in this wish. The point on which the sages and philosophers of all nations have been, and are even now, still at variance, whether the moral and intellectual standard of the people should be raised, whether they should be enlightened, was decided thousands of years ago, by thee, great teacher of man, noble instructor of the people!

The people saw that the skin of thy face shone! (thus does God's Holy Word testify,) whilst thou gavest them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken; and only when thou hadst done speaking, didst thou put a veil upon thy face!* A wise lesson for you, public instructors! To cause thy light to shine, such was thy aim, thy endeavour! All, all should be taught, enlightened; their powers of heart and head should be so raised, that they should all learn to distinguish the true from the false, the eternal from the transitory, that they should all glorify God, all become prophets of the Lord. Our forefathers were to become this, and their posterity should become so likewise. Hear, then, and perceive, what is alike the vocation of all. "YE SHALL BE PROPHETS UNTO THE LORD." There exists not a nobler name, a higher destiny, a more glorious calling; for in order that you may become a prophet,

Wisdom must guide you,
Heroic courage sustain you,
Wealth protect you,
Cheerfulness animate you.

* Exodus xxxiv. 33.

The wish comprehends this: we will examine it more closely.

I. *Wisdom must guide you;* for the prophets of the Lord must possess wisdom.

If all the people are to be prophets, then must all the people be in possession of wisdom. How is this to be comprehended, my friends? Are we to understand the word wisdom as it is often understood by the multitude? Is it the wisdom that consists in varied and extensive learning, that fills the head, but narrows the heart,—that draws us down to earth, and removes us far from heaven—that renders us skilful in investigation, but unfit for action—that refines us, but ennobles us not—that deadens our faith but quickens not our virtue? Is it the wisdom, whose followers assert, that they will understand, can understand nothing, save what they see with their eyes, and feel with their hands; as though higher things were opposed to *their* reason, *their* judgment, *their* knowledge. Is it the wisdom that stalks abroad, like a phantom of night, and laughs and mocks at all things holy, exalted and divine? Is it the wisdom that acknowledges no God, or only such a God, as in its arrogance it has imagined, a being as weak and full of frailty as itself, as its adherents? Is it the wisdom that believes no order to reign in the universe, or forms an ephemeral system, such as is not, and never can be? Is it the wisdom which has no faith in any thing spiritual; or terms that spiritual which is an emanation of a heated fancy, a creature of a diseased imagination? Is it the wisdom which can form no sound judgment, can

see no ray of the light which shines above us, around us, and within us? Is it the wisdom whose followers call themselves *natural religionists*, but who are in fact extravagant sophists, and unsound reasoners? Is it truly such wisdom as this that the prophet must possess, and that we also should seek after? No, no, beloved friends! The Lord defend us from such wisdom, the inheritance of fools, and which alas! receives such undue homage from worldly minds. LO THEY HAVE REJECTED THE WORD OF THE LORD, therefore (we may ask with Jeremiah) WHAT WISDOM CAN THEY HAVE?

But in what, then, consisted the wisdom of the prophet? In the recognition of the one Eternal God, in thought and deed: in Him he lived and wrought: Him did he receive into his spirit, his heart, his words, and his actions. In what consisted the wisdom of the prophet? In the knowledge of the attributes of the Deity, derived from the sacred writings, and from nature, in the investigation of His ways and counsels, in so far as it is permitted unto mortal man to understand them. In what consisted the wisdom of the prophet? In the knowledge of man, of his powers and capacities, and of the best means for developing them so as to ensure the welfare of the individual, and of the whole human race. In the knowledge of their duties and of all the precepts which relate to the due performance of them. In what consisted the wisdom of the prophet? In rightly distinguishing between religion and superstition,—between the reality and the semblance,—between the spirit and the letter,—between the book of life, given us by God himself, and the contaminating words of man. In what

consisted the wisdom of the prophet? In proving by his course through life, how deeply he had drunk at the holy fountain of all wisdom.

Let all these things united be also your wisdom, O! man, O! Israelite, O! congregation of the Lord. Learn to understand heaven, to know earth. Look *below* you, and learn how *exalted* you are. Look *around* you, and learn what it is incumbent on you to do. Look *above* you, and learn who hath commanded you. There are periods (this is one) in which even Wisdom arrays herself in tinsel,—all is alloyed, all is glittering, all is false. It behoves you for your own sake, for that of your children, to be on your guard. Let your wisdom consist in knowing and loving the Most High, as the Bible teaches you to know and love Him, without uselessly discussing and cavilling—human ingenuity can furnish you with nothing purer. Let your wisdom consist only in ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well, as the Bible exhorts you to do, without prevarication and guile. No human reason can teach you your duties more clearly and explicitly than the Bible. Enter life with this fixed purpose; show yourselves to be the servants, the handmaidens of the Lord. Let your guide be the holy maxim, The fear of the Lord is the beginning and the end of wisdom. O, would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, in such wisdom living and acting!

II.—Heroic courage shall sustain you!

Ye shall be strong and of good courage, for it was necessary that the prophet should be endowed with

boldness. Thus an old maxim teaches us; if thou wouldest be a prophet, thou must unite wisdom with courage. If all the people are to be prophets, then must they all be armed with strength and fearlessness. How is this to be understood, my friends? Is it such courage as is termed courage by the world? Is it a strength that is employed in oppressing the poor, in attacking the defenceless, in falling upon the weak? Is it such courage as leads to pride, and comes before a fall? Is it a courage which betrays its possessor into arrogance, so that the world becomes too narrow for him? Is it the clenched hand of the great ones of the earth, that menaces the oppressed, so that they become as dumb, and rejoice if they are not crushed by it altogether?

Of such strength, of such brute force, there can surely be no question among prophets, among those who are holy unto the Lord. Among such as say, "I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheek to them that plucked out the hair; I hid not my face from shame," we seek not *physical* strength, and even if such possessed it, it would engender no presumption in them. But let the *inward*, the *moral* man show himself strong and fearless; let his trust be strong in Him, who alone possesses strength; let him have courage to oppose and to vanquish the follies of the world; let him have courage to hold at nought the approbation of worldlings. Such is the true character of a prophet; such should be *your* character! He who can confidently say with uplifted eyes and heart, "For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded, therefore have I

set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near me that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me?" * —that man, I say, is stronger than man, stronger than fate! This is a prophet's courage, a prophet's strength! This shalt thou acquire, O man, O Israelite, O prophet of the Lord! And would you ask me whence the prophet obtained his strength, his courage? He derived them from the consciousness of having acted according to duty and righteousness; from the confidence that he should receive defence and protection from Him by whom he was sent; he derived them from his guileless, childlike piety and innocence of heart. Because he was *blameless*, therefore was he *fearless*. This guileless, childlike, innocent heart was the armoury whence the hero drew weapons of defence in the conflicts of life.

I have recognised the strength of these weapons, and, praise be to God, I have employed them in life. I present them unto you, my brother, my sister. Ye can all wield them; thus armed, you can pursue your path, firmly, boldly, nobly, courageously, without looking anxiously to the right or to the left, behind you or before you, unembarrassed by adverse circumstances, by unfavourable positions. Possessing God in your heart, and the power of using these weapons, you can never be overthrown, you can boldly face the two greatest enemies that can rise up against you—prosperity with

* Isaiah l. 7.

her smiles and caresses, adversity with her trials and sorrows; by them you will not be subdued. Reasonable and childlike faith is the prophet's sword; inviolable truth in word and deed, the prophet's shield; the hope in brighter hours, even in the darkest day, is the prophet's helmet; justice, even towards those who injure him, the prophet's coat of mail; unspotted innocence, the prophet's breast-plate—the love of God, his standard and his watchword, which ye also must bear with you into the thickest fight, saying, I HAVE SET THE LORD CONTINUALLY BEFORE ME, WHILE HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND I SHALL NOT BE MOVED. Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, armed with these weapons, endowed with such courage, such heroism!

III. Wealth shall protect you.

Ye shall become rich, for the prophets ought to have rejoiced in the possession of wealth. How, again, are we to understand this, my friends? Are these the riches that make themselves wings, like the eagle's, and fly away before you have had time to behold them? Is it the wealth which satisfies not its possessor, but, as Solomon says, causes care, and banishes sleep from his eye-lids? Is it the wealth which renders its possessor proud, arrogant, and insolent, so that he cries out, By *my own* strength have I gathered it: who is the Lord? Are they such riches as excite in man an insatiable hunger, an unquenchable thirst, so that, like the ravenous bird of prey, he rakes in the mire, though the plentiful store of corn be nigh. Of such wealth there can surely be no question among prophets. Of what

avail would such riches be unto those who spring forth in the night, and in the evening are withered. But to want little, to forego willingly, to be moderate in his demands, modest in his wishes, temperate in enjoyment —such was the prophet's wealth. Happy is it for us, if such treasure be our portion! Had those chosen of the Lord indulged in many wants, in much outlay, in extravagant pretensions, then would gold and silver have had undue value in their eyes. Then would gold have blinded them, silver dazzled them, and what would then have become of the truth, which it behoved them to practice and to teach? They would have been false prophets, venal servants of mammon, worshippers of the golden calf. How could they chastise the rich and the powerful with the breath of their lips, with the arrows of their words, if they themselves had trembled and worshipped before the same idols? How could they have dared to approach the throne, and to call aloud unto the princes; Your thrones totter, and with them ye will also be cast down, because the firmest supports—*justice, benevolence, virtue* and *truth*, are wanting alike to them and to you! He who would hold such language must possess the strength of the affluent, must bear treasures in his bosom, must require little, must be rich in inward wealth! This is the wealth you must acquire, O man, O Israelite, O congregation of the Lord! For is not each, in his own sphere, equally called upon to act and live according to truth? Is it the less your duty, because your vocation is not that of teacher, to protect truth and innocence against all who would oppress them? But would you *be able*, would you *desire* to do this, if at each step you feared that it would prove

prejudicial to your interest, that one man would deprive you of this advantage, another would transact less business with you, another invite you less frequently to his splendid banquets? Be rich within yourselves, rich in the highest sense of the word—you will not then beg for paltry coin, you will not court personal, momentary distinction, you will not be allured to unrighteousness by the prospect of any earthly good.

If you have learned to be satisfied with little, and to adorn your brows (as I have said in a former discourse) from early youth, with a crown of abstinence, O then how can you ever become poor, or dishonour the name of your God? Let the times be ever so unpropitious, GOD IS YOUR SHEPHERD, YE SHALL NOT WANT. Such trust is then unto you the staff of life, your treasure, your wealth. Oh would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and rejoiced in such wealth!

IV. Cheerfulness shall animate you, for the prophet's spirit should be cheerful.

If all the people are to be prophets unto the Lord, then must they all pursue their course through life with a cheerful and contented mind. Need I observe, that by a cheerful happy spirit, I do not mean that frivolity (so especially the characteristic of the time) which childishly disregards all ties, and thus leads those who yield to it to perdition, that love of pleasure whose followers live in one uninterrupted whirl, who prepare the hall for a second festival ere the first is ended? But it was forbidden to the High-priest to indulge use-

lessly in sorrow; neither should prophets resign their hearts wholly to sadness. Always prepared for the service and calls of his holy office, the prophet should preserve an unclouded brow, a serene temper of mind, a cheerful demeanour. He who beholds the face of the Lord forgets the sorrow and care in which truly life abounds. And what could dispose the wise, the highly-gifted, the courageous, to sadness? Were the present ever so stormy, it caused him not to tremble: in the haven in which he sought refuge there was nought to fear. And the future? To the prophets, from the greatest to the smallest, it appeared radiant and bright as the meridian sun. The prophets stood on high, *waiting*, *listening* and *watching*: waiting, even though it tarried; listening, though but a whisper was heard; watching, though it lay remote. A land was before them "where no violence is heard, neither wasting nor destruction within its borders, whose walls are called Salvation, and whose gates Praise, in which dwell a race of righteous ones, where the sun no more goes down, nor the moon withdraws itself, for the Lord is its everlasting light,* and the days of mourning are ended, and the wounds are healed, and liberty is proclaimed to the captive, and the prisons are opened to them that are bound, and those that mourn are comforted, and the lowly exalted, and the waste cities are repaired; and the mountains and the hills break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands, and instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree,† and the wolf and

* Isaiah lxv. 18—19. † Isaiah lv. 12—13.

the lamb, and the lion and the calf dwell together; and the sucking child plays on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child puts his hand on the cockatrice's den, and the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord,* and the people speak one language† over all the earth, *one* aim, *one* love, *one* will, *one* God—and there is one Lord and his name one."‡ Must not the soul be enraptured at the prospect of so much unspeakable bliss; must not the heart of the prophet indeed rejoice?

Such rejoicing must also be thy portion, O man, O Israelite, O congregation of the Lord! It must be your portion, O my beloved, for ye also have to execute the behests of your God. Every law imposed upon you by reason and the Bible, every duty pointed out to you by reason and the Bible, is a charge given you by your God; ye men and women, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, youths and maidens, sons and daughters. Is not the countenance of the mother radiant with joy after she has cared for her infant, and watched over her child? Does not the father rejoice in dividing the hard-earned fruits of his industry among his beloved ones? Does not the philanthropist rejoice after he has aided the sufferer? Does not the sage rejoice when he has shed light where darkness prevailed, and broken the fetters which bound a sorrowing fellow-creature? And though the present may leave much to be desired—though it may rob you of much, very much, it cannot rob you of a cheerfulness of spirit! When you look within, you must behold heaven—and, for the future,

* Isaiah † Zephaniah. ‡ Zechariah.

BA BD JD

fear not. What the prophets beheld was not delusion; the Lord placed their holy visions before their eyes. Look with their steadfast clear gaze into the distance; and though it should tarry, wait confidently as the prophets did. May the holy maxim be your guide. "OUR HEART REJOICETH BECAUSE OF HIM," and "A CHEERFUL HEART MAKETH A GLAD COUNTENANCE." Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that such cheerfulness were their portion!

Do you now know the prophet's wisdom, the prophet's strength, the prophet's riches, the prophet's joy, the prophet's mind, the prophet's life? Yes, you do know them. Let not the matter rest here. Seek to make them your own; do all that in you lies, in order that the greatest, the most exalted wish ever uttered by the lips of man, may be fulfilled, that it may be verified in life: "WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM!"

Yes, that He would put His spirit upon them; such is the means by which alone this wish can, will, must be realised. *Mercy* and *love*, *righteousness* and *peace*, *truth* and *fidelity*, these are the Lord's spirit, as it is made manifest in nature, and in scripture. *God's* goodness must possess you, *God's* love must warm you, *God's* justice must strengthen you, *God's* joy gladden you, *God's* truth enlighten you, *God's* faith sustain you. This spirit must rest upon us, must animate us, bless us, if we would become prophets unto the Lord. This spirit must work within, whether you dwell in your own

[illegible] the lion and the calf dwell together; and [illegible] on the hole of the asp, and the [illegible] on the cockatrice's den, and [illegible] the knowledge of the Lord,* and the [illegible] over all the earth, *one* aim, [illegible]—and there is one Lord and [illegible] the soul be enraptured at the [illegible] bliss: must not the [illegible]?

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Do you now know the prophet's wisdom, the prophet's strength, the prophet's riches, the prophet's joy, the prophet's mind, the prophet's life? Yes, you do know them. Let not the matter rest here. Seek to make them your own; do all that in you lies, in order that the greatest, the most exalted wish ever uttered by the lips of man, may be fulfilled, that it may be verified in life: "WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM!"

Yes, that He would put His spirit upon them; such is the means by which alone this wish can, will, must be realised. *Mercy* and *love*, *righteousness* and *peace*, *truth* and *fidelity*, these are the Lord's [illegible] it is made manifest in nature, and in scri[illegible] goodness must [illegible] you, *God's* love [illegible] ou, *God's* just [illegible] trengthen you, [illegible] dden you, *G*[illegible] ighten you, [illegible] ustain you. T[illegible] rest upon us [illegible] us, bless us, if [illegible] come prop[illegible] Lord. This s[illegible] within, w[illegible] l in your own

families, or be for a time removed far from them; whether your connections, your undertakings, be more or less extended, more or less important; whether your occupation be temporal or spiritual; whether you abolish or confirm regulations; whether you enjoy pleasure, or endure and subdue pain; whether you receive life, or restore it to Him who giveth and requireth it again. The Lord's spirit, like unto this, must be your aim; the Lord's spirit the centre of all your circles; the Lord's spirit the only end of your whole life! Whatever does not accord with this divine spirit, gives not life, gives not peace, affords no enjoyment, brings no blessing, cannot render either you or your's happy. Without this divine spirit you breathe, but you live not; without this divine spirit you dream, but you think not; without this divine spirit you have sensation, but no feeling; without this divine spirit, your learning cannot make you wise; your wealth cannot make you rich; your strength cannot make you powerful; your pleasures cannot make you glad. Why does there exist among men, with all their working and striving, their thinking and seeking, their improving and embellishing, and their teaching and learning, so much that is deformed and feeble in their houses, in their institutions, in their provinces, their nations, their governments? Because a *lying spirit* rules among them—(as among the prophets of old)—an *idol*, and no *God*. They cast glittering garments upon the idols of hatred, envy, selfishness, covetousness, meanness, folly, infidelity, intolerance, shamelessness. Men patch together miserable rags, and term them priest's garments, a heavenly mantle. But wherefore should I speak in metaphor? men declare *their own*

spirit to be the *spirit of the Lord.* What they desire not themselves, they forbid in the name of the Lord. This engenders, and has ever engendered, folly and weakness, sickness and misery. The sluggard would cloak his sluggishness with the garb of caution; and exclaims, when real improvements are proposed; "Do not shake the old edifice, either pull it down entirely, and build yourself a new one, or leave it as it now stands." That is the spirit of slothfulness, in whatever house you may dwell, whatever religion you may profess, but not the spirit of the Lord. The fearful would conceal his fear, and exclaims, at every step that is made in advance to promote the well-being of mankind, "Would that this proceeding may be unaccompanied by disastrous consequences! What will this one and that one say to it?" This is the spirit of cowardice, but not the spirit of the Lord. The covetous would conceal his covetousness, and says: "O yes, I would willingly promote noble undertakings, but wherefore should I, with my hardly-earned mite, contribute to chimerical schemes?" For such does he deem all things by which his chests are not filled. This is the spirit of covetousness, but not the spirit of the Lord. The fool would conceal his folly, and says: "What has the world gained by the spreading of light? Were not the earlier ages better than the present?" This is a spirit of darkness, but not a spirit of the Lord, who is light and truth. Unwise teachers, false prophets, would declare their intolerant spirit, and their darkness, to be light, and testify in the name of religion against all whose belief differs from theirs: they would preach religion, and forget its first precept:

"What thou dislikest, do not unto others;* love every man as thyself." What do those babbling hypocrites? They prune, and twist, and turn the words of the Bible and the law—be it the earlier or the later law; be they the words of Moses, or of them who have drawn their knowledge from his writings, till such meaning be accepted as they think it good to apply to them. This is a spirit of night, but not the spirit of the Lord. O, who would not desire that all the Lord's people should be prophets, with its old men and young men, its superior and subordinate officers, its masters and servants—that the Lord would put His spirit upon them all? This spirit of the Lord can alone make men prophets; wise and yet modest; strong, and yet mild; rich, and yet humble; cheerful, and yet sober; high, and yet accessible; godly, and yet human; looking towards Heaven, yet working for earth; professing one religion, yet loving the whole human race with as warm a love as the seer of the Lord, the Prophet of the Lord. Yes, beloved ones, *prophets.* In the original language, the word נָבִיא is used for prophet, and really signifies speaker, orator. Such was the office of the prophet. This should be your office, if ye would be prophets. But it is not the lips, the tongue —it is the *act* which speaks; it speaks louder than the organs of speech. Your office of prophet shall declare itself in your deeds! And if God's spirit really rests on you, you will not desire to hold any other language, or to be a mere orator, you will not merely declaim of virtue in fine words and metaphors, and you will not bear your religion on your lips, without feeling it in

* Talmud.

your hearts, or showing it in yourselves. No, he, in whom dwells the spirit of the Lord, speaks the language of the Lord. Is it needful that the Lord should tell you, in the words of man, that He alone is God? Does not every thing speak for Him, of Him? His goodness, His wisdom, His truth, His justice, His holiness, do they not shine forth in His suns, gleam in His moons, sparkle in His stars? do they not blossom in His trees, bloom in His flowers, murmur in His breezes? Speakers like unto these should your actions be. Your whole life should be one sound; what ye do, what ye leave undone, your profusion, your want, your joy, your sorrows, your life, and your death—a prophet's speech in which the Almighty works. To think of Him, feel Him, behold Him; to belong unto Him; in Him to live and act; this alone can form men such as mankind needs, prophets of the Lord on whom God's spirit rests.

We must consider one more point, my dear friends, and then we will close our present discourse. Many, who hear what we exhort men to do, and how high a standard we would place before them, would call us *visionaries*, or at least if they would much honour us, *pious visionaries*. They would ask; "How can that which you require be accomplished? Look around! The children of men are little worth; they wander hither and thither, and heap folly upon folly." But, my dear friends, the highest virtue is in itself no vision; you render it such by deeming it impossible: it is not so difficult to vivify it, to put it into action, if each individual would so will it; each father, each mother, each son, each daughter, each public servant, each private individual. "Men are little worth." Let each

individual begin to be worth something. From these single efforts, a large aggregate of good must ultimately result. Men recede: let each individual begin himself to advance, the mass will go forward.—"They heap folly on folly:" Let each one begin to lay aside his folly, how wise will the mass become! Individual instances of advancement you acknowledge; but is not the mass composed of individuals? Wherein then consists the delusion, the impossibility? Let each believe himself capable of much in the domain of morals; his strength will increase by exercise, each single virtue is a flower in Virtue's chaplet. Let each carefully contribute his mite, and not only the *man*, but mankind will rise higher. What the inspired have spoken, will one day be fulfilled. *One day!* and though that day should tarry, await it: that is the prophet's spirit. They beheld not the entire fulfilment of the glorious and the holy things which they predicted! That did not deter them from unweariedly teaching and testifying, warning and reminding, speaking and working for children, and children's children; and the latest generations reap the harvest which they have sown. Let us follow their example, beloved friends, and wrestle, and strive, and never rest, and never repose, till each has fulfilled the command of his Father, to be a prophet unto the Lord, animated by the Spirit of the Lord.

Yes, O Lord, may Thy Spirit rest upon us; may we be worthy of Thee and of ourselves; never standing still, but always advancing, may we become wise in Thy wisdom, strong in Thy strength, rich in Thy possession,

joyful in the light of Thy countenance. May Thy Spirit, O Father, rest on our English father-land, and on its princes; the spirit of gentleness and love, that they may execute justice with judgment and strength in Thy name, like unto the prophets of Thy word. Let Thy Spirit O Father, rest upon the rulers of this land, that they may watch over the general welfare with paternal care and may ever rejoice in Thy favour. Let Thy Spirit, O Father, come down upon the elders of the congregation, that they may work for the well-being of Israel, as once Thy prophets wrought. Pour out Thy Spirit, O Father, on the whole congregation, on fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, man-servants and maid-servants, yea, upon every one who wears a human aspect; may they all be active in doing according to Thy light, for their own benefit, and for the service of the whole human race. O God, if all Thy children would but keep Thee before them, if all would imitate Thee, how much that is great and glorious would be created upon earth: how soon would the wounds inflicted by hatred and discord be healed, how soon would the tears and sorrowing of the afflicted be dried! O let our eyes behold a new earth, such as the prophets have promised; and let our ears hear in every song which resounds here or elsewhere to Thy praise, the "Thrice Holy" which Thy prophets heard. Teach us ourselves to become holier; yea, more and more holy! Amen.

SERMON III.

THE MIRROR OF ABRAHAM.

GENESIS xxii. 1—14.

WHAT holy delight fills our heart, O Father in heaven, in that it is permitted unto us, to appear in Thy presence, to partake of the blessed feast prepared for us in Thy house, and to refresh our souls at the fountain of Thy delight! How would our better self be lost amid the din of the world, could we not from time to time, take refuge in Thy parental heart, and there forget sin and sorrow. Grant, then, O Father, that not one cross this threshold in vain; that not one quit it empty. Grant, O grant, Father, that Thy holy word may penetrate our hearts, that it may strengthen us, and bring us near unto Thee. Give us to understand and to imitate the life of the pious and of Thy saints. Grant that the paths we tread may lead us nearer and nearer unto Thy presence, until, crowned with holiness and righteous works, "our spirit seeks its eternal home." Amen.

AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT GOD DID TRY ABRAHAM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, BEHOLD, HERE I AM. AND HE SAID, TAKE NOW THY SON, THINE ONLY SON, ISAAC, WHOM THOU LOVEST, AND GET THEE INTO THE LAND OF MORIAH; AND OFFER HIM THERE FOR A BURNT-OFFERING UPON ONE OF THE

MOUNTAINS WHICH I WILL TELL THEE OF. AND ABRAHAM ROSE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND SADDLED HIS ASS, AND TOOK TWO OF HIS YOUNG MEN WITH HIM, AND ISAAC HIS SON, AND CLAVE THE WOOD FOR THE BURNT-OFFERING, AND ROSE UP, AND WENT UNTO THE PLACE OF WHICH GOD HAD TOLD HIM. THEN ON THE THIRD DAY ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND SAW THE PLACE AFAR OFF. AND ABRAHAM SAID UNTO HIS YOUNG MEN, ABIDE YE HERE WITH THE ASS; AND I AND THE LAD WILL GO YONDER AND WORSHIP, AND COME AGAIN TO YOU. AND ABRAHAM TOOK THE WOOD OF THE BURNT-OFFERING, AND LAID IT UPON ISAAC HIS SON; AND HE TOOK THE FIRE IN HIS HAND, AND A KNIFE: AND THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER. AND ISAAC SPAKE UNTO ABRAHAM HIS FATHER, AND SAID, MY FATHER. AND HE SAID, HERE AM I, MY SON. AND HE SAID, BEHOLD THE FIRE AND THE WOOD, BUT WHERE IS THE LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING? AND ABRAHAM SAID, MY SON, GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING; SO THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER. AND THEY CAME TO THE PLACE WHICH GOD HAD TOLD HIM OF; AND ABRAHAM BUILT AN ALTAR THERE, AND LAID THE WOOD IN ORDER, AND BOUND ISAAC HIS SON, AND LAID HIM ON THE ALTAR, UPON THE WOOD. AND ABRAHAM STRETCHED FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOOK THE KNIFE TO SLAY HIS SON. AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CALLED UNTO HIM OUT OF HEAVEN, AND SAID, ABRAHAM, ABRAHAM! AND HE SAID, HERE AM I. AND HE SAID, LAY NOT THINE HAND UPON THE LAD, NEITHER DO THOU ANY

THING UNTO HIM; FOR NOW I KNOW THAT THOU FEAREST GOD, SEEING THOU HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON, THINE ONLY SON FROM ME. AND ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES AND LOOKED, AND BEHOLD BEHIND HIM, A RAM CAUGHT IN A THICKET BY HIS HORNS: AND ABRAHAM WENT AND TOOK THE RAM, AND OFFERED HIM UP FOR A BURNT OFFERING, INSTEAD OF HIS SON. AND ABRAHAM CALLED THE NAME OF THAT PLACE, JEHOVAH-JIREH: AS IT IS SAID TO THIS DAY, IN THE MOUNT OF THE LORD IT WILL APPEAR.—(Gen. xxii. 1—14.)

A very remarkable, if not the most remarkable passage in the whole of Scripture. History, both sacred and profane, furnishes us with many examples of great and high-minded men who have performed extraordinary actions. They accomplished, with miraculous strength, what to common natures appeared to border on the impossible. But nowhere is there to be found such an instance (the heroic mother of the Maccabees excepted) of strength of mind, of undaunted courage, of unbounded, unshaken trust in Him "who speaketh, and it is so; who commandeth, and His word is fulfilled." Such an example of a man's renouncing the deepest wish of his heart, the dearest, the most beloved object of his life; in one moment renouncing the happy present, the still happier future, of a tender and affectionate father offering as a sacrifice to God, because God commanded it, his most adored, his only son: such an example, I say, as the Father of the Faithful presents to us, stands far, far higher than any ideal representation of resignation and self-denial. To sacrifice themselves,

how many have done this for an exalted opinion, for a beloved fellow-creature, for their people, their country—but a father, who had prayed, waited for his son during a lifetime, had formed the highest plans and hopes for himself and posterity, to be fulfilled through his means, who must then devote that son to death! I again say, thou standest far above all ideal models of resignation and self-sacrifice, Father of the Faithful! He knows not, suspects not himself, that such strength dwells in his bosom, notwithstanding all that he has done, all the dangers that he has encountered; but that latent strength is to be awakened, its possessor has to learn that it dwells within him; he is to exercise it, to disclose it (this is the object in this and other instances of trial,) he is to prove to his own and after-ages, what strength is given to the pious and believing of heart; and in this manner he is to serve as a model to succeeding generations, of a life consecrated in thought and deed to his God. How Abraham acted on this occasion, in what manner he was prepared to perform the sacrifice, what then came to pass, how the hero of this history used and improved these circumstances, truly in all these particulars the image of this holy, godly life, will stand reflected before your souls, as in a mirror (we will call it Abraham's mirror,) in which ye also may learn to sanctify and exalt yourselves. Unto this end, O Father in heaven, give Thy blessing, pronounce Thy Amen!

"AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT GOD DID TRY ABRAHAM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, BEHOLD, HERE AM I." See, my friends, in this godly life, the watchword is, "Here

am I" (הִנֵּנִי); a little word, but expressive of the deepest fervour, of filial obedience, of the utmost unconditional readiness to fulfil the behest of Him who is our Lord and Father. God calls "Abraham!" Abraham has no reply save this, 'Here am I, Father, speak. Thy child listens; Here am I, I follow Thee: give, take, take or give: Here am I, what is good in Thine eyes, that will I do.' Beloved friends, say, is it thus with you; do ye also understand this word in its full meaning? When the follies of the world cry aloud, when envy, revenge, anger, hatred, covetousness, and sensual pleasures call, then, O then, indeed, we answer quickly and loudly: however weak we may be, we rouse ourselves and exclaim, "Here am I, here am I!" and never tire of repeating, "*Here am I!*" however frequent may be the summons; but when the Almighty calls on us, for He calls not upon Abraham alone, but upon us also; He calls on us by the voice of reason, by the voice of revelation; He calls on us in the storms of winter, in the breath of spring, in the warbling of the birds, in the lisping of the infant, in His temple where truth is taught unto us, and where love and the desire of righteousness are awakened within us. Is our answer, then, likewise, "Here am I?" O my beloved, how often do we then hold back, how often do we forget that the voice of the Lord has called upon us also, and shut our ears, and close our hearts to its sound! Say, my friends, how often do ye hear the divine call to provide for the welfare of your immortal souls, to throw down the barrier which superstition, infidelity, error, or scepticism has raised between you and your heavenly Father, and how seldom do ye stand forth and

pronounce the short, but comprehensive, answer, "Here am I!"

How often does God require you, through the angels of his word (for such are all the good and excellent men, who by their example admonish you to do that which is good and right,) to avail yourselves of the means of improvement with which He hath furnished you? Answer me: how many are there who step forth into the presence of their God, and exclaim to Him, "Here am I?" How often does He call upon us to plant God and religion, by means of a purer and more simple mode of life, modesty and unpretending manners on our own parts, in the bosom of the helpless infant, to keep a higher aim in view in his education, and to give an ennobling direction to his moral and intellectual development. Ye fathers and mothers, answer me, how long will it yet be, ere ye can firmly step forward prepared to reply: "Yes; it is the voice of my friend that calls: until now I have slept, now my heart awakens, 'Here am I?'" Examine, prove yourselves, my friends, behold yourselves in Abraham's mirror; look at your own image, not as it is usually, or today, but as, God grant, it *may*, *must* be, one day reflected.

"AND GOD SAID, TAKE NOW THY SON, THINE ONLY SON, ISAAC, WHOM THOU LOVEST, AND BRING HIM FOR A SACRIFICE UNTO ME. AND ABRAHAM ROSE EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND WENT UNTO THE PLACE WHICH THE LORD SHOWED UNTO HIM." The dearest, the best that Abraham possessed, God requires as a sacrifice. He does not ask of him one of his ser-

humanity; you have hearts, you are not hard as stone. But how far are you still from renouncing a favourite wish, a long indulged passion, a ruling sin: you also admit that God hath no pleasure in that ye should wander in darkness, and ye therefore build your dwelling so that a few rays of the light of heaven shall enter the obscure chamber; but how far is it yet removed from the full light of morning, from having, like Daniel's summer-house, its windows turned in the direction of Jerusalem,* in order that you, and your sons and daughters may ever behold and receive warmth from the orb of day! Ye prefer to make a compromise between light and darkness, to walk in *twilight.* Ye serve God, but at the same time have several to whom ye do homage, but God will not share thy offering with others. 'My son,' He calls unto you, 'Give me your whole heart, your whole soul, all your possessions!' When God requires sacrifices, they must not be unclean, dead, but perfect and full of life: Herein, do we obey? No, we bring impure, unworthy offerings. Many lead a useless, idle life, and labour not in the garden of God, only feed therein, like beasts of the field! Many consider themselves servants of the Lord because they wander around His garden; they believe they watch it, when all its precious fruits are withered. While they wander *around* it, instead of watching within it, its blossoms are trodden down, its sweet herbs torn up by the roots! MY FRIEND HAD A VINEYARD IN A VERY FRUITFUL HILL, HE PLANTED IT WITH CHOICE VINE, AND BUILT A TOWER IN THE MIDST OF IT. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE MORE

* Daniel vi. 11.

TO MY VINEYARD THAN I HAVE DONE IN IT? WHEREFORE, WHEN I LOOKED THAT IT SHOULD BRING FORTH GRAPES, BROUGHT IT FORTH WILD GRAPES?* And many come and offer themselves as a sacrifice, when the hand of death is already upon them, would sacrifice their passions, when those passions are exhausted by indulgence, would cease to sin, when the power of sinning fails them. But my friends, in the bloom of life, when evil sends forth her demon voice to allure you, then resist her, raise your eyes on high, consecrate yourselves to heaven, sons of Abraham, who in the flower of his days, in the bloom of strength, was made holy unto the Lord!

"THEN ON THE THIRD DAY ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES AND SAW THE PLACE AFAR OFF. AND ABRAHAM SAID UNTO HIS YOUNG MEN, ABIDE YE HERE, AND I AND THE LAD WILL GO YONDER AND WORSHIP." On the third day! This mention of the interval that had elapsed, is not without its value, my friends. It might have been objected, "O, this resolution was no more than the act of an excited mind, full of morbid enthusiasm, the work of a fanatical visionary. What is there great in this?" I know, my friends, that men were always, and are particularly in our day, inclined to attribute all uncommon actions which are incomprehensible to the multitude, to enthusiasm. But the noblest characters of ancient times might then be deemed visionaries, and the most exalted virtue fanaticism: yet, Abraham fulfilled the Divine command, not on the instant, but on the *third* day—he had sufficient time

* Isaiah v. 1—4.

for reflection, he lifted up his eyes, he wandered not blindly to the goal, but beheld the place from afar with composure, for his resolution was taken. The state of Abraham's mind was long since firmly fixed: he knew in what relation he stood to his God; hence he vacillated not, was steadfast and constant. Suns might wander from their orbits, the star of day might go back—he quits not his course, he recedes not! See, my friends, *firmness* is the characteristic of a life dedicated to God. Is it thus with us, my friends? many alas, know but one species of constancy, they are constant in change; they resemble the bark that drifts before every gale—the wind may blow whence it listeth, if it be but favourable to *their* voyage, and carry *their* ship safely into port. Let us turn our eyes upon Israel; we are the smallest of all the races of the earth; it is not likely, accordingly, that we should count among our numbers as many who earnestly seek what is right and good; but if we could only be assured the few who profess to seek the good, would be that to-morrow which they are to-day, that in the coming, which they are in the present year, could we but rely upon their being ready on the *third* day to perform the sacrifice which they promised on the *first*, then, I say, it would be well with ourselves and our children. We could then prepare healing balsam for many a wounded heart; could plant again many a garden, now overgrown with weeds; could re-build many a fallen edifice, and courageously demolish what ignorance, scepticism and sin have erected! Why are we wanting in this constancy? Because we are wanting in other things besides. We know not ourselves as yet, we are ignorant of the relation in which we stand with our God; we ask, we doubt, whether He dwells

among us or not,—whether His word is true or not,—whether it is, or is not necessary to our welfare. Our individual self, our worldly interests, these are the objects dearest to us in the universe. God, and the belief in God, if they exist at all within us,—these treasures, alas, are of secondary consideration. We renounce them sooner than our own interests; they fill not our hearts, they penetrate not our breasts, they dwell not in us, we dwell not in them. How can we think of constancy, of steadiness in our efforts to obtain our aim, when the aim itself is subject to daily change? Oh! my friends, contemplate long and earnestly our 'Abraham's Mirror,'—compare your wavering with his constancy, your vacillation with his steadiness, long and earnestly compare them. Firm, steadfast hearts are wanting among us: may every house, every family, possess such a treasure. We stand in need of hearts and souls which will be to-morrow what they are to-day, and who in the hour of death will rejoice that as they were, so are they still!

"AND THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER. AND ISAAC SPAKE UNTO ABRAHAM HIS FATHER, AND SAID, 'MY FATHER;' AND HE SAID, 'HERE AM I, MY SON,' AND HE SAID, 'BEHOLD THE FIRE AND THE WOOD, BUT WHERE IS THE LAMB FOR THE BURNT OFFERING?' AND ABRAHAM SAID, 'MY SON, GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING.' SO THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER." Place yourselves for a moment in Abraham's situation, my friends.—The innocent boy wandering by his side, ignorant of what is to come, enquires for the sacrificial lamb, which in a few minutes he is himself to become.—What shall he

reply to the dearly beloved, who will so soon cease to breathe? Shall he avow the fact? Why should he, sooner than necessary, alarm his child? deceive him! Oh! such a father could never deceive his child, still less at the moment of eternal separation! He tells him the truth, which, however, still continues veiled to his understanding. GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING, MY SON.—More he cannot say. They proceed together, but they speak not.—Abraham's grief is deep, but silent. Though sorrow has a part in this holy life, it is a resigned and silent sorrow. I will not enquire how it is with you in this respect, how you endure misfortune. I will but remark that man shows himself only truly great, when he bears grief with calm submission, with tranquil resignation. Beloved friends, ye understand me, whose position forbids your betraying to others by sighs and tears, the burden that oppresses you: ye are often compelled after weeping in solitude, to appear with a cheerful countenance among the gay and happy. Look in Abraham's mirror, you will see yourselves therein reflected, and your soul will thence draw consolation. Greater than *his* grief, your's cannot be,—more silent, more resigned! But one thing have ye in common with him; his Friend above, is your's also. He is also the participator in your grief, the confidant of your lamentations, He is also your help and deliverer! Cast yourselves on His heart, if no other beats for you; raise unto Him your weeping eyes, heaven will reflect itself in your tears, your wounded heart will be healed, you will proceed tranquilly on your path till the goal be reached! Ye also, in the second place, fathers and mothers, behold Abraham's mirror. Not unfrequently

does it happen, that we stand at the death-bed of our children, not our children around ours; that instead of their carrying us, we bear them to the place of eternal repose. Behold their blooming cheeks fade, their mirth dies away, the fountain of youth becomes dry, our dear ones cast upon us imploring looks, and we cannot aid them, they lisp to us the once sweet words, My father! My mother! and these words tear our hearts. O my beloved, I know the anguish, but I know also the balm. Exclaim once more, with soul raised to Heaven, Help us, O Father, give aid if it be good that aid be given; and if our Heavenly Father aideth not, say, "God has provided himself a lamb for the burnt offering!" He is Father, and Lord, and benefactor, when he giveth, when he taketh away. Ye all tread the same path, if not together, yet one follows after another. Therefore, tranquillise your hearts, and believe, my brethren, that your children are gone unto their Father. Do you, also, whom other sorrows have visited, contemplate Abraham's mirror: he is calm under the pressure of grief, is careful not uselessly to distress his only, his beloved son! Learn from him, O man, to conceal thy grief when its manifestation would give rise to affliction in others. If an unworthy child cause thee to mourn, if a brother or a sister err, proclaim not thy grief aloud; thy child, thy brother, thy sister, may become better, but the world gives not easy credence to their improvement. Thou mayest thus have injured those who were dear to thee, by thy clamorous sorrow. Thou mournest for a lost treasure, with thee sorrows thy beloved, thy wife. Be calm, be still, lest the dear ones who are around thee be overwhelmed by their affliction, for their sakes be tranquil.

Ye gentle beings, if your husbands deal harshly with you, and address you in tones in which love speaketh not, if ye have reason for discontent, if ye be misconstrued, deceived, bear your burden in silence, that your sons and daughters may not behold in your sighs and tears their father's unworthiness, that they may not become his accusers and cease to love him. Behold thus is sorrow seen in a godly life. Whenever we pray to our God to spare us from affliction, let us pray also unto Him to grant us a resigned spirit under His chastening hand.

Let us turn once more to Abraham's mirror, and we will then conclude. The place is reached, the altar erected; a father's hand lays the sacrifice on the altar; a father's hand is raised to fulfil the divine command. O! how weak is man *without* God! how strong *with* God! Of what is man capable?—He, whom a gust of wind can prostrate!—how can he conquer the acutest pangs, when acting for and with his God! He, the sport of his own desires, how does he triumph over his emotions, his nature! Is love strong as death?—the godly man is stronger than love, for he overcometh love itself! A brighter flame burneth in his bosom. Give me thy child, thy dearest: thus Heaven calls. He snatches it from his heart, and gives it, or rather *would* give it! More, however, the Almighty asketh not. The design of God is fulfilled. "Abraham!" cries the voice of an angel. "HERE AM I." You again hear the comprehensive word. "Stop." NOW I KNOW THAT THOU FEAREST GOD, SEEING THOU HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON, THINE ONLY SON FROM ME. AND ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND BEHELD A RAM CAUGHT IN A THICKET BY THE HORNS. AND ABRAHAM TOOK THE RAM, AND OFFERED HIM UP

FOR A BURNT-OFFERING. And Abraham called the name of the place (יהוה יראה), that is to say, "The Lord will manifest himself." In a little time, and the son would never again have awakened on his father's bosom: but in this important, decisive moment, God interposeth; the angel of the Lord calls, God manifesteth himself! And hath the Lord never shown himself unto thee in an important and decisive moment?—If thy life has been holy, thou must have beheld Him! Dark and mysterious, life may frequently appear, for the counsels of the Lord cannot be fathomed. When will it end? How will it end? How shall I endure? Yet see! the mystery is cleared, the counsels of the Lord become bright as mid-day: the whole scene has changed. Angels of the Lord, for such may thy fellow-men become, (and to thee, the form of thy fellow-men is dearest,) have operated the change at God's behest. See, the dear son, the beloved daughter, are sick; thou hast renounced them; hopelessly thou hast quitted their bed of suffering. But they live, they revive, they bloom, they become once more thy joy, thy delight. Then doth God manifest himself. The life of a father, a mother was in danger, and already thou beheldest orphans around thy couch.—See, an unexpected change takes place. The physician's well-directed glance was the angel's look, his voice the angel's call, who manifesteth himself in the name of the Lord. How many of you here assembled, have found yourselves placed in overwhelming difficulties! Ye desired not such things as contribute to the elegancies, the pleasures of existence; ye only sought the necessaries of life,—bread to feed, a garment to clothe, a bed for the repose of your offspring. See, something occurs of which

ye dreamt not. Friends! patrons arise and open for you the path to fortune. Not *one* angel's voice alone sounds from heaven; it appears as though heaven itself were opening its portals, and pouring its treasures in your lap! But how can I enumerate all the instances in which God appears to us so manifestly! Only be attentive to what passes in life, only listen to the voice of God. He often calls on you by name; listen but to the call, and answer "Here am I, here am I." Thus did Abraham: and what did he besides? He called the place "God manifesteth himself:" there he prayed, there he built an altar, there in after days, was erected the holy temple of the Lord. O my beloved, must I then ask, how do we distinguish the place, the hours, the days in which the Lord hath manifested Himself unto us, in His majesty, His mercy, His grace? Days on which ye have escaped a danger, on which a beloved life has been spared, on which you have been rescued from poverty, restored after sickness to health, on which a son, a daughter has been born, to a father, a mother! By what do ye distinguish such days, I again ask? *You make yourselves merry!* Would I could employ a commoner term, for so very usual an occurrence. *You make yourselves merry*, that is all. Who reflects that such days, above all others, should be passed in peaceful piety, in the centre of all who are dear to us, should be marked by righteous works, useful and beneficial to all mankind, and that the spirit of such days should be, 'God manifesteth Himself.' Who remembers that on such days we ought to kneel and worship God, and render thanksgiving and praise? O again contemplate long and earnestly Abraham's mirror, my friends. Do you see his image? Seek to resemble it. I cannot present any

thing more beautiful to your view! Let His watchword be yours, as often as God shall call, "Here am I!" His motto yours, as often as God shall require a sacrifice, "The best to the best." Give to your morality and religion the character of His,—firmness. Trust in God to-day, to-morrow, as long as ye breathe the breath of life, with a quiet and holy faith, even when overshadowed by the night of suffering. In such a night He will be to you the brightest star, the star of love and hope. Seek to behold God, and He will manifest Himself to you, when His aid shall be most unexpected. But mark such moments of your lives with something imperishable, eternal. Step forth thus into life: follow the path unto which God leadeth, which God will show unto you. Enjoy the pleasures of life and rejoice that God hath spared unto you the dear ones who are around you, to embellish your latter days: but train them, not only for earth, but also for heaven. O that they may seek and find heaven; take heed that they bear a heaven within them in heart and spirit, that they may join their voice in the "Thrice Holy" of the angelic choir! that they may elevate themselves unto God, that His praise be continually in their hearts!

Hallelujah! Amen!

SERMON IV.

A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF A GREAT LIFE.

GENESIS XXV. 8.

A FUNERAL song, a lament for the dead, and yet no grave—no death! for ye who cleave unto the Lord your God, ye live! live eternally, with the sons and daughters and all the dear ones, whom your Heavenly Father has given unto your affections. He has watched over you and them, and amid the sad chasms which time and distance have created in so many circles, the All-merciful has stayed the hand of the spoiler and has caused *our* dwellings to be passed over. Wherefore then do the words first uttered, recal to your minds the tomb and death? Because I desire to shew you life as exhibited by the man, the beloved of God, who has furnished to us the materials for a succession of discourses, for much contemplation. In the triennial circle which our weekly portions embrace, the sermon of to-day will be the last, of which Abraham, the father of the faithful, will be the subject. The picture, my friends, presented to us by the Bible and history, of the deeds of great and extraordinary men, is not completed, until the stern master death, has silently given the finishing stroke. Abraham also will stand to-day, for the first time, in completeness before you, when you shall have become acquainted with his return home—his death.

We dwell but too willingly with those who have become dear to us in life. We have embraced them fervently, and would not again be separated from them. If they tear themselves from us, if they depart for another land, we stand as rivetted to the spot and our eyes are fixed upon them as long as sight can discern them. Thus are our eyes fixed this day on the man in whom God decreed that all the generations of the earth should be blessed. We contemplate his life, that we may learn to live.

Yes, O Father in Heaven, we would learn to live, as often as we appear in Thy presence! Therefore is Thy dwelling so pleasant unto us, O Lord! Therefore do our hearts long and pant for thy courts, where flesh and spirit rejoice in the God of life. And as the bird seeketh and findeth its dwelling, as the swallow prepareth her nest for her young, so do we seek and find Thy altar, O our King, our God! so do we prepare it for ourselves and our children. Let us not tarry in vain in Thy house. Let thy word also this day influence us for good; may a noble life long since ended, instruct and elevate us! Grant that we may thence learn better to understand our destination and employ our powers, on this our pilgrimage, for the benefit of mankind! Grant that we may continually become more faithful to our duties, that our hearts may ever beat more purely, and kindle with a holier flame for each other! Grant that we may all be blessed with the conviction that the earth is not the limit of our activity—that the messenger of death is an angel of life, a heavenly envoy sent by Thee; with the faith, that none are destined to annihilation, but all are

called to immortality, are called by Thee to dwell eternally with the pious souls who may precede or follow us, to live eternally a life of the purest delight, a life in the fulness of bliss, in Thy presence, Lord of eternal life, Father of immortal spirits! Amen.

The word of God, which shall this day guide our meditations, we find in Genesis, chap. xxv. verse 8.

AND ABRAHAM GAVE UP THE GHOST, AND DIED IN A GOOD OLD AGE, AN OLD MAN AND SATISFIED: AND WAS GATHERED UNTO HIS PEOPLE.

We will here pause, my beloved brethren, and survey the life of a righteous man of old--the life of Abraham; at the first glance we shall see:—

Man in his true destination;
Religion in her true form:
Piety in its real greatness;
Life in its loftiest signification.

Each of these points deserves serious attention: God grant that their combined examination may instruct and ennoble us! Amen.

I. Of this, my brethren, be convinced, that the individual as well as the whole human race, feels within him an irresistible impulse to go forward—to rise higher. Our natural conformation with our powers and capabilities, shows that tendency. And if we understand that nature aright, we shall be convinced that we are alike desirous and worthy, of perfectibility; we shall be convinced also, that our well-being will be proportionate to the height

we attain in the scale of improvement; the higher we rise, the happier we shall be. Now tell me, my beloved friends, do we really go forward? Do we really make any advance towards perfection? Are you not surprised, my friends, at such a question? 'Do *we* make progress? Do we advance towards perfection? Who can doubt this? There is scarcely a branch of knowledge which we do not cultivate, scarcely a branch in the fertile soil of our age but grows unto a tree! See how the domain of the arts and sciences is daily extended! how wide the circle of our investigations! We behold bright light where we were wont to grope in darkness! We have clear, well defined views of subjects, upon which those of our forefathers were confused. The spirit of scientific enlightenment has everywhere penetrated. Refinement no longer exclusively belongs to the upper classes, even the lower rejoice in, and boast of, its possession: what more can be desired?' This is all very well, my friends; but notwithstanding, I say unto you, it might be better. I tell you, notwithstanding all this, more *is*, more *ought* to be desired! I ask you farther; Does our welfare stand in due proportion to our progress? Has the number of the good increased, of the bad diminished? have we become on the whole happier? We can scarcely reply unanimously in the affirmative. Were such an assertion made, I need only remind you how many tears still flow, how many wounds are still unbound, how much disorder still prevails in large and small circles, how much devastation takes place, alike in the hut and in the palace, what persecution the brother has still to endure from the brother, man from his fellow-man! Our strivings after perfection must accordingly be misdirected, my friends;

their true aim must be misunderstood, otherwise happiness would result from them. The aim is misunderstood, the end pursued is not the right one. And do you know the reason? In our time science advances rapidly, but not wisdom: in our time the intellect is cultivated with the utmost solicitude, but not the heart. The balance between both is destroyed: the heart has lost many of its rights. But out of the heart comes the life; thence must the tree of life draw its nourishment. Woe unto us if it cannot strike deep root therein! Now draw near, and look closely at the course of Abraham's life. Recollect that the circle of his knowledge, three thousand years ago, was not of great extent: but, nevertheless, what a strong-minded man presents himself to your view! How much that is great and noble is there in all that he says and does! How deep and pure are his feelings and his opinions, in reference to the Most High, to the Eternal! How child-like and unshaken is his faith in the just and good, how firm and unbounded his trust in the Almighty! How unhesitating and entire his obedience to the word of God, whether it commands or forbids! Thus does he appear in relation to his God.* Consider him in that of man to his fellow-man. He exercised unceasingly all that we understand in these days by the word "philanthropy." † How conscientious with regard to the rights of others! ‡ How sympathising in the sufferings of others, how active in their service! His house is open to all who require hospitable shelter; he allows them not to seek it, he hastens to meet them

* Gen. xii. 4; xv. 6; xviii. 26; xxii. 1. 10.
† Humanität. ‡ Gen. xiv. 24.

and bid them welcome! He prays for sinners, he would not that they should be rooted out with fire and sword, he would save and improve them. He evinces kindness and faithfulness to his kindred, and devotes to them his powers and his life: he loves to dwell at peace with his brethren, and would sacrifice much to ensure it: and where the safety of innocence is at stake, you see him bold and prepared.* All men without exception, are sacred in his sight; he loves mankind with the most disinterested affection, an affection that does not calculate, that is regardless of persons, and of his own interests; with a love that strives and works for posterity, that seeks to bless the most remote generations. Behold, these are evidences of a well-formed and a noble heart, whence springs more that is good and exalted, than ever can or ever will proceed, from the most highly-cultivated intellect. Would that in this we returned to the course of the men of old! Truly, this retrogression would be an advance! Do not imagine that we desire to recal the days of ignorance and darkness. The Father of light forbid, that we should fall into this error with so many of our contemporaries, who would that the sun-dial of time should recede, because they have receded themselves. But among the men of old, the heart was also of some importance, the heart was of more importance than with us. O my friends, we form a singular contrast to the ancients. *Knowledge* was far less extensive among them, the powers of the mind were not so variously employed, but were all concentrated into a focus. Their morality had a large and lofty character, they

* Gen. xiii. 7. 9; xiv. 13. 24; xviii. 1. 8. 23. 33.

achieved something great in the exercise of all the virtues, or rather not *virtues*, but virtue itself was the object of value. In this respect you need not think of distinguished Israelites only: in the clear mirror of the world's history, heathens of such character come before us. With us in these days, it is the reverse. The number of the sciences studied by many, exceeds that of the years which have passed over their heads. Knowledge is many-sided, wisdom one-sided. There are few among our contemporaries who can be said to wear a garland of virtues: here and there a stray blossom may be found, one great moral quality stands but too frequently in painful contrast with ten faults and failings. Such a state of morals, my dear friends, is really worthless. If we desire to form really great and good men, we must not forget that the one thing needful is a large and good heart. Let us seek to develope and improve the qualities of the heart, at least as fully and carefully as the powers of the head: if the seedtime be past for the old, (though the seedtime of the heart should never pass,) let us the more eagerly seize it in the young. If you are careful to cultivate their intellectual faculties, be yet more careful to ennoble their affections. If you make it your aim to extend their acquirements, make it still more zealously your aim to improve their morals; if you lead them to think, lead them still more strenuously to act, to live. We must educate youth to be better, and in them the world will be happier. It is not heads filled with science, but hearts full of virtue, which render the world happy. Therefore do I conduct you this day to the grave of a perfect man, who knew little, but effected much; therefore do I declare unto you, that

man's destination is, and ever will be, to endeavour to form the heart for all that is great, good, holy, and godlike.

II. A sage of old says, that if Virtue appeared in her true form among men, all hearts would be turned to her, all lips would praise her, she would every where be a welcome guest. This may be far more strenuously affirmed of religion, my brethren. Did she but appear before our sight in the heavenly garb of light in which the Father of men sent her unto His children, none would hesitate to bow the knee unto her and all would receive her into their hearts, their spirit, and their life! To unite and bless the children of men, to render them brotherly and godlike, on earth below, and in heaven above, therein consists the true essence of religion. But how was she first misunderstood and then misrepresented by mankind! How many garments were hung about her, till at last she could scarcely be recognised! In what coarse garb was she enveloped, till her own radiant form was scarcely visible! Sometimes a fanaticism repugnant to reason, at others a superstition offensive to God, was artfully tricked out and offered to us under the name of religion; sometimes the goad of the task-master was placed in the hand of her who should lead her followers by the silken bond of love, and should employ, at most, but the gentle staff of the Shepherd. She, it is said by those to whom she is especially given in charge, should rule and have dominion, because they themselves desire to exercise dominion, and therefore they give her a disguise, in which she may assume such dominion. Then these exclamations are heard: 'My

God!—thy God!—your God!—their God!' whereas religion, in her true, original form, teaches but one thing to the inhabitants of the universe, to all creatures endowed with reason: 'Our God, the God of all!' Sometimes a long list of ordinances and regulations and opinions, was promulgated and adopted as religion: then we had complicated religious edifices, but not religion. She was given in charge to the memory, the understanding, but the heart remained empty; life was neither illumined by her beneficent rays, nor warmed by her invigorating breath. Is it matter of wonder, then, that some men by degrees renounced her entirely, that to others she became an object of derision? Is it matter of wonder that on many who boast that they have taken fast hold on her, she has wrought no benefit? Do they really possess the living daughter of heaven? No, no; they have nothing but the lifeless corpse! O come and behold Abraham's life! religion lives therein: not one of these perversions is to be seen. There lives *one* God, who called forth heaven and earth! one God, who is his God, the God of all heathens, the God of all worlds! one God, who requires nothing of his children, save that they should exercise justice and virtue.* Therein dwells a piety which bends the knee and folds the hands less frequently, but consecrates instead the inward man to Him alone; a piety, that does not manifest itself in idle words, in unintelligible and mysterious customs, but in actions; a piety that strives after God and His glorious kingdom, by purity of morals, holiness of heart and uprightness of conduct; a

* Gen. xix. 19; xviii. 18—20; ibid. ver. 25.

piety that does not participate in the delusion that virtue can be dispensed with, but whose very being is virtue, the source of all virtue. O look deeply into Abraham's life: in it there were early heard the truths enjoined on us by our prophets and teachers. Religion consists in doing justly, in loving mercy, in walking humbly with your God;* it consists in stopping the ears from hearing evil, in shutting the eyes from seeing vice, and the hands from the gains of oppression.† Religion consists in this: in loosening the bonds of the captive, and in letting the oppressed go free; in breaking our bread to the hungry, and in bringing the afflicted into the house; in covering the naked, and not hiding ourselves from all who are flesh and blood as ye are, O men.‡ Religion consists in this: in speaking the truth in our hearts, in doing no evil, in not slandering our neighbour, in protecting innocence.§ Religion is this, and this above all is the very heart and soul of all religion; to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to love God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our might.‖ From the tent of Abraham, of our ancestor, these tones came forth. Here Religion was seen in her true form! Men, Israelites, what would you then? Wherefore do you strive, wherefore do ye quarrel? Wherefore are you at variance? Religion appears in our Father, in her most beneficent, in her true form: if you have not this, you have none. You know what Abraham did. What sophistry calls religion he knew not. What time in-

* Micah vi. 6—8. † Isaiah xxxiii. 15—17.
‡ Isaiah lviii. 6—8. § Psalm xv.
‖ Levit. xix. 18. Deut. vi. 5.

vented in order to fence in your degeneracy, was unknown to him. Nevertheless, God calls him His friend, His beloved!* He also erected altars, he also uttered prayers;† but the prayer, the altar, the sacrifice, were not the substance of his piety, they were but the outward expression of that which dwelt within: beside the prayer, the altar, the sacrifice, there was a heart, desiring and working only for the good of his fellow-men. Thus should it be with you and not otherwise. The temple, the hymn, are not piety, they can merely testify of the piety that dwells within you, they will lead you to a practical useful piety, to his piety, to his religion!

III. Hitherto Abraham's manner of life has been the most beautiful text of our discourse, and we have not needed to quote the words of our text itself. Now that the end of this life approaches, we will seek, in scripture, how it terminated. It answers us as follows; and in this answer we perceive piety in its real greatness: "Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full (of years)." My brethren, the happiness of a truly pious man is a beautiful spectacle to behold; to see that he forgets not what he is, and becomes neither supercilious nor immoderate; to see how modestly and humbly he receives all good gifts from the hand of God, in the spirit of these words; "I am not worthy of the least of all these mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast shown unto Thy servant: who am I, and what is my house, that

* Gen. xviii. 19. † Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 18, &c.

Thou hast brought me hitherto?"* A truly pious man in *adversity*, is also a great spectacle, my friends, to behold with what patience and resignation he raises his eyes to heaven, and says, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" † to see that his courage fails not, and that his trust remains firm in Him, who maketh rich and poor, who humbleth and exalteth. It is a glorious spectacle to see the pious man renounce the splendour to which he had been long accustomed, and enter calmly, contentedly, and happily, with his wife and children, the lowly hut, cheerfully smiling and exclaiming, "Doth not God dwell here likewise?" These words are his stay. But the departure of a truly pious man from the world, is a far greater and more exalting spectacle, a departure like unto Abraham's. "He departed" (וַיִּגְוַע). The Old commentators on the Bible remarked, that this expression indicated a gentle painless transition, unattended by anxious fore-forebodings and distressing fears and visions, such as torment the irreligious. "He died in a *good old age*." ‡ There are many who attain to a *grey* old age: "For have I not seen also fools take deep root!"—but a *grey* old age is not always a good old age. The path of virtue can alone lead to a good old age. And in what consisted the happiness of Abraham's old age? Our text answers, "he was old and *full*." Translators in general render the word (וְשָׂבֵעַ) in the original, by full, (satisfied). But is man, though he should live a thousand years, ever satiated with life? As it is with the child, in the words

* Gen. xxxii. 10; 2 Samuel vii. 18.

† Job ii. 10.

‡ בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה

of the poet, who tires of his thousand sports—but of *sport*, sweet sport, never: so it is with man, he tires of this, or that mode of life, but of life itself, of the sweet habit of being, he is never weary; and still less, if life bears an aspect such as Abraham's bore. But the word in the original has a higher meaning, satisfied with deeds, full of works, full of great, noble, godlike actions. Thus did he die, contemplating a rich seedtime, and confiding in a yet richer and more blessed harvest. He had lived: he saw, in departing from life, that he had lived that he had lived rightly; that he must be old, full of days. To see such an old man die, is truly the most sublime spectacle, for his bed of death testifies aloud of the greatness and blessedness of virtue. Will you, also, beloved children, learn from the Father of the Faithful how to die? Not he alone, but you also, have received high behests from your Father in heaven. If death should summon you in the midst of your work (for even the end appears to us to be but as the middle of our course,) will you be able to depart hence full of deeds, rich in deeds? Alas! should it be otherwise! Have you ever well considered what would be your feelings, should you at the hour of departure, have to accuse yourself of having neglected to do that which you ought to have done in the training of your children? Superintendents of public institutions, have you clearly brought to mind how your heart would fail you, should you be obliged to say in departing, 'We might have corrected many abuses, we might have overcome many prejudices, we might have introduced many reforms; but we have neglected to do so, from indolence, from love of ease, or from selfishness.' Ye affluent, have you also,

ever called to mind how it would distress you at the day of death, should you have to say to yourselves? 'What sums have we squandered, how have we held back, when called upon to promote a useful institution, to help to save, to plant, to build up!' Have you, that are aged and full of days, well considered how painful it would be to you, if, in the hour of departure, you were obliged to say to yourselves? 'How many, many years hath God given unto us, how much, how very much, might we have effected by advice and action, by instruction and example! How little have we actually accomplished, there remains hardly a trace of our existence!' Ye youths and maidens, have you also thought well what would be your state of mind, if called hence in the bloom of youth, you had to exclaim, 'O God, we would have performed our duties in later years, but until this day we have been occupied solely with amusement and display, vanity and frivolity!' Alas! alas! we have done nothing pleasing to God and man! Bring these scenes frequently before your mind: but, on the other hand, think of the peace, the cheerfulness, the satisfaction of the dying patriarch! We cannot attain unto his age, but length of life should not be measured by the number of years, but by what has been accomplished therein. If an earnest will and pious zeal have not been wanting to you, if you have done all that you had it in your power to do, then you have lived long, you have become old. You can lay your head down, you can close your eyes in peace! Wherever you may have been placed, whether high or low, you have effected much in your sphere. The traces of your life are still visible, you look upon them with satisfaction. They are angels

of light; they range themselves with the beloved ones around your bed of death, you depart old and full, and the day of your death is better than the day of your birth.

IV.—But this earthly immortality cannot satisfy our aspirings. It is in truth a source of comfort to the dying, if he can say in his heart, 'I continue to live on the earth in my actions.' The expiring mother falters forth 'My dutiful daughter loves me, she can never forget me.' The departing father consoles himself with the reflection, 'Oh my son, I dwell in thy heart, my memory will ever be dear unto thee." The conscientious instructor exclaims with his parting breath, 'No, the young minds will not forget me,—their guide, their friend.' But I tell you, this does not suffice unto us, if we cease to be and to act, if we pass away and are annihilated. Annihilation! Oh fearful thought, to have passed over the earth like a dream, a vision!—with all our capacity for wisdom, virtue and righteousness; with an intellect that could conceive worlds, a heart that could love God, to have had no other destination than that of manuring the soil. But who that has contemplated the death of the pious Father of the Faithful, could fear this? Could fear that existence will ever cease? Blessed is our race! Thrice happy are all of you, to whom God has revealed Himself, to whom He would offer consolation in His holy word. ABRAHAM WAS GATHERED UNTO HIS PEOPLE. Herein is declared the highest object of our being. To be gathered unto his people, means something far different from being laid in the grave. These words are immediately followed in the

original by:—"AND HIS SONS BURIED HIM IN THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH." The dead body is spoken of in the latter passage; but *he*, he himself was gathered unto his people. Thus is the death of the pious described in the Scriptures. Our death is a return home to the beloved ones, is a reunion with the souls who were dear unto us. To be gathered unto his people—not only the eternal existence of our spirit is here declared, but also the blessed relationship into which it will enter, although it is too generally imagined that such a declaration is no where to be found in Scripture. We shall meet again, we shall again behold one another after death. We are gathered unto our people! According to this, life beyond the grave is only a continuation of life on this side the grave; existence here, but a small portion of existence there: thus, do time and eternity embrace each other; and life on earth, and life in heaven, form one inseparable whole. Your being, once begun, must continue for ever: the scene changes, the sphere of action is different; thither are you called, with all your powers and capabilities, with your purposes and schemes, your thoughts and feelings, your strivings and works: you will be active there as here, under the guidance of the same Father, in whose book all our days were inscribed even before we yet were. O my brothers and sisters, what importance does not this belief give to human existence! How changed is the aspect of death! Of what can death deprive us? When the hour of departure strikes on our ear, we do not die, we go to those who have long dwelt with their Father. Each night we separate, with an affectionate pressure of the hand, a parting blessing on our lips. If those whom

we love are summoned away sooner than we are, they die not, they go before us; they continue to belong to us, they remain ours in love, which is stronger than death. Do we not still continue in communication with those who are dear to us, even though long distance divide us from them, when they dwell in a far foreign land? There is then no difference, excepting that not they, but we are dwellers in the strange land; they live in the universal home, towards which we are still journeying. When contemplated from this point of view, what a light is shed over our existence! But one thing is the more necessary, beloved friends: that we should not go hence empty,—that we should carry with us great thoughts, pious deeds, such as are pleasing alike to God and man. We must be accompanied by the blessings of the brothers whom we leave behind us; and in our new sphere we should meet no one, who can accuse us, no one at sight of whom we must feel self-reproach. How is this to be attained? Consider yourselves, as did Abraham, as strangers on the earth; in the strange land, prepare yourselves, as Abraham did, for your home. Be like him, feel as he felt, act as he acted! Cultivate all the noble qualities of the heart; seek and practise religion, as he sought and practised it, in virtue and uprightness, in order that you may possess something with which to refresh and strengthen your thoughts, when you are gathered unto your fathers. Well will it be with you, if you thus live, if you thus die! You live and die with the sublime thought, the exalting reflection, that, 'Though the grave and separation await me, my soul rejoiceth in the Lord—for death is not!'

Amen! Amen!

SERMON V.

PARENTS BESTOW EARLY YOUR BLESSING ON YOUR CHILDREN.

GENESIS xxvii. 1—4.

THOU, God! art eternal! but how transient are we! How soon will the lips that now call on Thee become dumb! How soon will the eye now raised unto Thee be closed! How soon will the heart that now beats for Thee be stilled! All that have breath pass away; the wind passes over us, we are no more;—no more? O no! Thou all merciful Father of mankind, eternal as Thou art, eternal is Thy goodness unto those who fear Thee, eternal Thy love to our children and children's children, if they keep Thy covenant, and remember Thy commandments to do them. Grant, O Father, that we may train and form those whom Thou hast placed in our hands, whom Thou hast confided unto us as holy pledges, to be worthy of Thy goodness, and of Thy love, that they may grow up in Thy presence, to the honour and glory of Thy holy name. May they steadfastly resist all worldly temptations, and remain pure and righteous in heart and spirit. Grant that ere we are summoned hence, we may have called down on the heads of our

beloved ones a lasting blessing, rich in temporal and eternal good. All merciful Father, do Thou confirm this wish, and say Thou, "Thus shall they be blessed now and for evermore!" Amen.

AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN ISAAC WAS OLD, AND HIS EYES WERE DIM, SO THAT HE COULD NOT SEE, HE CALLED ESAU HIS ELDEST SON, AND SAID UNTO HIM, MY SON; AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, HERE AM I. AND HE SAID, BEHOLD, NOW I AM OLD, I KNOW NOT THE DAY OF MY DEATH: NOW THEREFORE TAKE, I PRAY THEE, THY WEAPONS, THY QUIVER, AND THY BOW, AND GO OUT TO THE FIELD, AND TAKE ME SOME VENISON; AND MAKE ME SAVOURY MEAT, SUCH AS I LOVE, AND BRING IT TO ME, THAT I MAY EAT; THAT MY SOUL MAY BLESS THEE BEFORE I DIE.

"I AM OLD, AND KNOW NOT THE DAY OF MY DEATH," says the aged Patriarch. He lived however, in fact, many years after the occurrence related in the above-named chapter, and saw his grand-children and great-grand-children, and rejoiced in them. But death was not to take him by surprise; therefore he would fulfil the holy duty without delay, and bestow his blessing on his sons.

This last point is that to which I would this day direct your attention, namely; 'How shall fathers and mothers render profitable the uncertainty of the day of their death?' I will answer without farther preface. Listen, and lay it to heart.

I. There are many among us, beloved friends, still in the vigour of life and strength, who cannot exclaim with the patriarch: "Behold, my son, I am old!" but we may all repeat his words, "I know not the day of my death!" and because, in this matter, all are enveloped in darkness, let us, as he did, early bless our children before we die! Let us seek to improve our position without, and ourselves within. That is the first part of the blessing! Philosophers call man a world in miniature, and truly there is much to be done in this miniature world. Improve your external position, my friends! It is sweet to work for those who are dear to us, it is sweet to prepare a happy lot for the beloved ones! Therefore be active, my brethren, as long as the strength of your arm fails not, the power of your eye is not dimmed. An *active* life is a pious life. Be active and delay not till to-morrow what may be done to day; but foster in your activity the fair virtue of frugality. If you gain much and squander much, you fill pierced vessels; what will remain to your family, especially if you belong not to the affluent, but to the middle class? Be active; seek to render your every undertaking successful, and in all your occupations, let order prevail, which is the soul of all activity. Disorder is an all-devouring monster. O may it not become evident, after you are gone hence, what havoc this monster has made in your earthly dwelling! May there arise therein no disputes, no dissension! Let not this ravager diminish or swallow up the portions of your children! Love order, my brethren; and let your image be pleasingly reflected in your last arrangement, in your last will. When you hear the summons to "set your house in order," it must be so

regulated that when you have ceased to direct it, it cannot again be deranged. Your earthly goods should be divided justly and fairly, so that the inheritance become not the source of enmity and strife; lest brothers and sisters dispute about mere pieces of silver, and a coat of many colours cause them to hate each other and to become as clamorous in their strife, as though they sought again to waken you from your deep sleep. No, no! wise activity, reasonable frugality, prudent order, will improve your external relations, and in them you will become a blessing unto your children. It is true, that the external relations of life can only furnish external advantages—the fatness of the earth, the dew of heaven, corn and wine;* but our inward condition insures us much more, incomparably more: improve then the inward condition, the inward man! This object is more difficult of attainment, more fruitful in good when attained. It is incumbent on us all to seek to improve, to place in order, our inward being. I address myself not only to the frivolous, who appear wholly to disregard the fact that they have a great task to perform ere they go hence; but I must also remind those who feel the importance of their destination, how much in their inward life there yet remains to be done. Our mental constitution is so delicate and fragile, that for its due preservation constant watching is necessary. How many errors must we dismiss, how many opinions must we correct, how many habits must we discard, how many desires must we suppress, how many passions must we combat, how many truths must we receive, how many principles must we confirm! How

* Genesis xxvii. 28.

much have we not yet to do, if we would be pure of heart, firm of spirit, upright in conduct, if we would that our sons and daughters should look up to us with reverence as well as love, and take us as examples; if we would that when we are removed from them they should mourn in us, not only their protectors, but also their instructors, the formers of their characters! Such is the only blessing we can bequeath unto them which will not pass away, which will remain, which will really work their salvation:—if even it should be impossible for us to leave them in our outward relations an outward blessing, our inward life is, and must ever be to them the greatest treasure we can bequeath to them, as an inheritance. Pious and virtuous father! when thou hast long ceased to exist, thy son will look up to thee in periods of temptation, thou wilt be unto him as a saint, thou wilt preserve him from evil, thou wilt encourage him in good, thou wilt be his blessing. When thou hast long slept in the grave, thou pious and virtuous mother! thy daughter will behold thee as often as life assumes a sad and clouded aspect; she will remember the wisdom, the foresight, the forbearance, the modesty, the indulgence, the affection, the self-devotion which characterized thee: thou wilt appear as an angel in her sight, thou wilt induce in her angelic mildness, angelic piety, thou wilt be her blessing! Beloved friends, we often hear the complaint that departed parents are so soon forgotten by their children. Alas! there may be here and there some few miserable, ungrateful souls: but, dear friends, you need not fear that this fate will be yours, if you bequeath to them *yourselves*, and in yourselves something great, something imperishable, immortal. In this period of

over-refinement, some of us have expressed a wish that our bodies should not be interred but consumed by fire, and the ashes deposited in an urn and placed in the dwellings of the surviving children. I say unto you, we should only have discovered for them one more object of luxury, but we should not insure ourselves against oblivion. Not our ashes, no, our names, our conduct, our virtue; our lives must be ever in thy sight, then we shall not be forgotten! In us they possess their blessing, this they cannot forget! and in the might of this blessing they will ever seek us, ever find us. Yes, when here below nothing remains for them to seek or to find, they will seek and find us there, there where this blessing can never pass away. Therefore give this blessing unto your children, and ye who have not yet done it, delay it not, but say, "I KNOW NOT THE DAY OF MY DEATH: therefore, come, beloved ones, that I may bless you before I go hence!"

II. As we know not the day of our death, my friends, let us take care that a healthy soul dwell in a healthy body. This is the second portion of the blessing. I refer you to your physicians for directions as to the best mode of ensuring health to the body. If they are enlightened men, they will give you enlightened counsel, to them it belongs to advise with you on this matter. I speak only of the health of the soul, and can tell you the real source of her health; its name is 'Freedom.' Free souls are healthy souls. Shall our children be blessed and remain blessed on earth? We must make them free men. Free! It is true, my beloved friends, that you cannot alter external circumstances, you cannot

prevent your dear ones from being limited and fettered by them, you cannot avoid their having something to suffer from prejudice and bigotry. I do not speak of the freedom usually termed civil freedom, I speak of a free inward world. Such inward freedom shall be their portion, they shall feel their dignity as men, feel that they merit a different position, even though it be not granted unto them. A free inward being! herein they shall ensure to themselves their own right of citizenship, they shall command and govern. A free inward man, strong and vigorous, not morally enervated, let us develop this in our children. I say develop it, for it will not spontaneously develop itself: it rests with you whether your children shall live in the world as slaves, or as free men, whether a blessing or a curse shall be their portion. He who can govern himself is free; your children must achieve self-control! To attain this end, two things are necessary. Our desires in general, but particularly the love of pleasure, must be restrained. This ye well know, unhappy beings, who find it impossible to silence the voice of passion, that you are anything but free; although so unrestrained in your conduct, anything but happy, anything but blessed. Shall your children become happier, freer, more blessed? Mark well their inclinations: this will not be difficult, for children are as they appear to be; they use no concealment, they do not gloss over their transgressions, as men and women do; therefore you can counteract them. Suppress cunning in one, in another the love of mischief, in a third envy, in a fourth covetousness, in a fifth a proneness to violence, in a sixth to deceit, in a seventh to lying, in an eighth to idleness. Do not fear

to hurt them, for they will subsequently hurt themselves, and that will be far more grievous to them! Firmness, wise firmness, must form a part of your plan of education; no free man can be trained without its aid, for man is an unruly being, even when born under the most favourable circumstances. He is given in charge, not to your feelings alone, but also to your reason, your understanding. But we must pause yet a little, in considering the most powerful enemy of freedom—the love of pleasure. We must withdraw nourishment from that desire. 'How often have we not heard the same remark from this place?' I answer you, that is your fault. As long as you continue to indulge that failing, so long shall we continue to warn you against it. When your forefathers sought a god in the golden calf, the Lord said: "IN THE DAY WHEN I VISIT, I WILL VISIT THIS* SIN UPON THEM."† As often as we speak of the welfare of your children, so often must we warn you to simplify their amusements, to moderate their enjoyments, because, from excess and luxury in the indulgence in pleasure, there ensues more evil than you can foresee. I say unto you, that if we do not seek, with all our might, to eradicate this plague-spot of our times, we shall form a wicked, a perverse generation. It is truly distressing to remark, how every indulgence is granted to the youth of both sexes that can please the palate or flatter the senses, how every capricious whim is humoured. The mischief is begun early. Observe how much luxury is shown in their articles of amusement: our infants' toys employ many thousand hands in

* According to an old commentator. † Exod. xxxii. 34.

their manufacture. I think that were our forefathers to rise from their graves, and look into our nurseries, they would affirm that regular families of dwarfs dwelt in them. Every thing in miniature is to be found in the apartment; you may see household furniture, which costs a larger sum than would support many a poor family for several months. You will object, 'Those who are not rich, will not indulge their children in such luxuries.' But do you know that you will remain rich, that your children will always be rich? And even though they should continue rich, forget not that you spoil these little beings, that you increase their wants, and that you produce in them, (though you know it not,) the erroneous belief that their wishes must be fulfilled. If Solomon's mother says to her royal son, "MY SON, AND THE SON OF MY WOMB, AND THE SON OF MY VOWS, IT IS NOT FOR KINGS TO DRINK WINE, NOR FOR PRINCES STRONG DRINK. GIVE STRONG DRINK UNTO HIM THAT IS READY TO PERISH, AND WINE UNTO THOSE THAT BE OF HEAVY HEART; LET THEM DRINK AND FORGET THEIR POVERTY, AND REMEMBER THEIR MISERY NO MORE:"* even the richest need not indulge their children with kingly playthings. Give what they would cost to the poor, the needy. What happens after our sons and daughters have passed the first years of childhood? We appoint them seats at our costly banquets, that they may early learn to know, and revel in, foreign delicacies. Yet we are not satisfied with indulging the palate, we serve many gods. We allow our children to be present at the most vapid dramatic representations, in which

* Prov. xxxi. 2—8.

insipid jests and, perhaps, ill-concealed sensuality, excite their still slumbering passions. What had been but imperfectly revealed to their minds in pernicious writings, must be thus made clear and manifest to them, that the poison may the more speedily sink into their young hearts. I must speak of another amusement, because it is abused and carried to excess. I mean dancing, the injurious influence of which, when too eagerly indulged in, the strongest natures cannot resist. To be moderate in the enjoyment of public amusements, is a part of morals, as well as of manners, of refined manners. Let us sum up these various items together. What a total! It presents to our view beings of many wants and much pretension, with various desires; but do you think that such a life can give content to our children, that their eyes can thus be satisfied, and their hands filled? Far from it! And if these demands, these wishes, these wants, be satisfied, do you think that this could be effected without misery, cares, oppressive burdens, and weary wanderings, to and fro? Now tell me if this be a blessing or a curse? Such a life produces enervated men, but enervated men cannot lead an active life, and cannot be actively useful. What must ensue? They would enjoy like men and women, and work like boys and girls, rise from the couch of luxury and debauchery, and hasten to work. But in this they can scarcely succeed. Now answer me; is this a blessing or a curse? Such a course produces vacillating men. None are more vacillating than the effeminate and the debauchee, every change, every whim, may bring them down from their heaven upon earth, they are afraid of every arduous employment. What can encourage them when

no pleasures invite, although in truth, the greatest pleasure is the fulfilment of duty? Such a course produces, finally, criminal men! Once perverted, they will forego nothing that can serve to gratify their sensuality; if necessary, they would lie, deceive, they would become traitors, alike to God and man! Life and history sufficiently attest, that of every unruly desire is born a beast of prey, that spares nothing in its fury, that tramples justice and truth under-foot, and vents its impious rage on every thing that can be an obstacle to its gratification: at length it destroys its possessor; for a life of early-awakened and wild desires closes but too often with satiety, and perhaps suicide. And do ye fondly deem that such a course can ensure to your children eternal happiness? My friends, do not regard these matters as light and unimportant. God forbid that we should begrudge to youth its pleasures; but have a care that they continue to be their pleasures, and that the flowers of life run not wild, nor degenerate into weeds. Truly existence ought to be for them lovely and full of life; but let them not destroy at once their life and their innocence. Habituate them early to forbearance; habituate them early to moderation, to content, to simplicity: seek afterwards to inspire them with the moral courage to disregard being thought by fools ridiculously good, ridiculously innocent, ridiculously simple. Form free men, capable of governing themselves; then they will not revel in wealth, if rich, they will not pine, if poor; they will not be dazzled by the sun of prosperity, they will not be prostrated by the storms of adversity; they will walk free and fetterless beneath the heaven

of God! Prepare this blessing for them; let those who have not already begun to do so, begin to-day; let each say, "I know not the day of my death; come then, that I may bless thee before I die."

III. Truly we know not the day of our death; therefore let us not delay to prepare a blessing for our children before we die: let us not misunderstand the designs of God, and let us strive to make of our children all that the Almighty desired they should become. This is the third portion of the blessing.

In each of our children, God manifests himself in two distinct ways, by a general and an individual manifestation. In the powers and capabilities which are the basis of all human nobleness, in the intellect, in the reason, in the memory, in the imagination of your child, the Almighty calls upon you to devote the most anxious care to their development; he requires it of you that you should carefully prepare the virgin soil, and sow it with the wholesome, fruitful seed of wise guidance and instruction, in order that the reason may be clear, the memory improved, the imagination diligently and lovingly cultivated, and that the man may step forth into life, furnished with all the knowledge and the qualities necessary to render him a useful member of the human family, useful and fitting for his duties, intelligent and prudent in social intercourse and activity, that he may know, wherever God may place him, whether at home or abroad, to make happy, to adorn his own existence. Such is the will of God; if we take heed of that will, we shall not permit our children to grow up in ignorance, but procure for

them such instruction as shall ensure to them daily increase in useful knowledge. We shall then leave them wealth of which, as the wise man says, no one can rob them, because they bear it within themselves. Again, God manifests Himself in our children, in an individual manner: and this is never sufficiently heeded! When we read of nations who trained their children all for one calling, we laugh, and we are right! But we do the same, we do not duly mark the qualities and inclinations, which distinguish one child from another. It is precisely in these natural gifts, in these peculiar powers, that God manifests Himself to the individual man, would show to the individual man, that He thinks of him individually, and not only as a being belonging to a species; He bestows on him a peculiar distinguishing ornament. And mankind need such peculiar distinguished talents, from time to time, if they are to advance. One such great man who has well understood his own inward power, benefits tens of thousands, nay often gives a fairer aspect to the whole human race. But if we do not listen to the voice of God, if we do not tend and cultivate lovingly and with peculiar care, the particular inclinations and powers shewn by the future man; or if we do not choose to cultivate these particular powers and dispositions of our children, because we cannot perceive that any advantage will thence accrue to them, or perhaps to ourselves: then do we counteract the designs of the Almighty and become sinners against Him, and our children. And what is the result? You give your children a vocation, in the pursuit of which they are never perfectly comfortable, and in which they can accomplish little, or can never rise above mediocrity.

How many unskilful, inferior men are there in every department! Their peculiar character remained unobserved, they were formed in accordance with the notions of their parents or guardians. It happens frequently that these peculiar powers are not to be misunderstood, —are clearly and strikingly revealed. Some children remain long and most willingly at one occupation or amusement, cannot resolve to quit it, and return to it again and again; in childish play even, an aptness for one or another employment may be discovered; do not refuse to see it, do not be unmindful of it. Sometimes the peculiar and superior qualifications of our children are not so striking in their manifestations. The voice of the Lord is then heard in a whisper. Be it your first duty, O mothers, to observe well your offspring, and to impart to competent instructors the discoveries you have made! Truly, God has not forgotten one human being, He has appointed unto each his peculiar place. But we seek to be wiser than He who is the wisest instructor and master.

I must meet one objection which you may make to me with some truth, in reply, as Israelite parents. You may say; 'We cannot develope our children's peculiar capabilities, as we should desire to do; our civil position limits our efforts, and it is still but too uncertain, whether the man would really be considered according to the ability that dwells within him. The particular belief must decide on the particular talent.' Beloved friends! if God speaks to you in any one prominent intellectual power of one of your children, then it behoves you unhesitatingly to obey Him. Wisdom herself supports and cherishes us. The gates of lawful activity will not remain for ever barred

against us: such illiberality will not every where carry the day. And as it appears to be often the destiny of the right-minded among the sons of Israel, that they should for the sake of peace, contribute to the upholding of appropriate and also of inappropriate institutions, in this instance also, my friends, I say unto you, "Educate and train your sons in such a manner that they may be fit for trade or commerce; but neglect not to cultivate their peculiar powers, should they even embrace such sciences and professions in the pursuit of which they are still asked; 'Whence do you come? Of what people are you? What God do you serve, and how do you serve Him?' Fathers and Mothers, would you bequeath a blessing to your children? learn to know them, and train them to become that which God designed they should become.

IV. Yet bestow on them that which the earth can neither give nor take away, and thus crown your blessings and your children. You have truly, my friends, conferred on them manifold blessings, in having left them a good example in your own lives, in having secured to them a free soul dwelling in a healthy body, in having sought to develop their general and individual faculties; but this is not enough. Think how powerful are the temptations, the menaces of life, think that you leave your children behind in a world in which sin watches at every door, in which, the more amiable your children are, the more snares will be laid for them—for spirits of evil, delight in the conquest of the lovely, the precious ones of the earth. True, they are protected in many instances by your having trained them to be prudent, thinking, intelligent, highly-cultivated human beings,

well-adapted for business and professions. They will not easily vacillate or allow themselves to be misled; but still, invulnerable they are not! Behold a well-illuminated saloon: mischievous youths come and extinguish lamps and tapers one after the other, it is possible, and experience has shown the possibility: but who can extinguish the meridian sun in the heavens?—Religion is this sun, she must shine forth in the lives of your children. Give them God—but God as He is, not as you would represent Him to be; not a God who beholds silently all their folly, not a God as weak and frail and indulgent as a human master: give them a God full of love and goodness, but full also of justice and holiness, that in His mercy will allow no sin to pass unobserved;* a God whom we cannot serve by fasting, sacrifice, and empty ceremonies, but by pure great deeds. Give them not a God who sits on high, and beholds but heeds not the actions of men: no, give them a living God, who looks down from His dwelling-place on the children of men, notes all they do and leave undone, and from whose sight no one can remain hidden. Teach them to know themselves: teach them how great, and yet how small they are; how little, and insignificant, for they are but tools in the hands of the Almighty; how great and important, if they make the will of the Almighty theirs, and work in His name; how little and insignificant, for they have, with all their power and intelligence, no control over one moment, if He calls; how great, and important, if they have God within them, if He be theirs for ever and ever. Let such religion as this be

* וְנַקֵּה לֹא יְנַקֶּה

active within them, and truly they will enjoy a blessing whose source can never be dried; it will lead them when their path is even and smooth; it will guide them among thorns and thistles; it will support them when the burdens of life become heavy in the weary pilgrimage; it will illumine them in the midst of darkness; it will protect them in conflicts with adverse fate and wicked men; it will be unto them balm and strength when the poor heart is wounded and bleeding; it will dry the tears of sorrow and suffering; and, when all else is lost, it will remain unto them, because it will live in their innermost life—this is religion! This is what the earth can neither give nor take away. This must your children possess, if you would leave them as blessed ones here below. My dearly beloved friends, let me not have said this in vain; keep these words in your hearts, and prove by your lives that you do earnestly seek your children's welfare. And in order better to attain that end, do not neglect the means presented by religion herself; open to them the sacred courts of the temples. Truly it is but little to come here once each Sabbath morning: sinful, unpardonable it is to neglect the service of God. Take care that they begin and end each day with an intelligible, fervent prayer: such a look on high strengthens us, improves us. Conduct them to the preaching of the Divine word, and convince yourselves that they have understood and accepted the lessons therein taught. Let them receive careful instruction in the word of God, and think not this of less importance than instruction in the sciences and arts invented by man! Consecrate them unto Him, the One, the only One, who was, is, and ever will be! Honor the marriage vow, that they

may learn to know conjugal union, in all its worthiness and holiness, that they may be reminded, in that great and important relation of their lives, of something great, something holy! Do not disregard the rational observance of the holy festivals, that your children may know that life is more than a mere table unceasingly spread. Take heed that they be reminded that man is more than dust of the earth! Thus will religion truly be unto them religion; that is, a help, a consolation, a friend, a guide, a conductor to happiness, temporal and eternal. Amen! Amen!

SERMON VI.

THE GREATNESS AND LOVELINESS OF HUMAN VIRTUE.

GENESIS xlv. 24—28.

WHAT a charge hast thou given unto us! O Father, what a blessed vocation is ours! To embellish the earth by our own lives, to shed a blessing on our brief existence. Would that we might be ever filled with this great, this holy office! Would that the idea of that to which we are destined, might ever penetrate our inmost thoughts, and that we might fulfil it wholly and entirely. Help us O Father, aid us to attain that end, let our actions ever bear upon them the stamp of virtue, of mildness, of grace! Depart not from us, dwell ever in our hearts, then will the several relations of our life acquire a fairer aspect. We shall act as children, brothers, men, in a filial, brotherly, human, and yet, God-like manner, according unto Thy will, for ever and ever. Amen.

SO HE SENT HIS BRETHREN AWAY, AND THEY DEPARTED: AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY. AND THEY WENT UP OUT OF EGYPT, AND CAME INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN,

UNTO JACOB THEIR FATHER, AND TOLD HIM, SAYING, JOSEPH IS YET ALIVE, AND HE IS GOVERNOR OVER ALL THE LAND OF EGYPT. AND JACOB'S HEART FAINTED, FOR HE BELIEVED THEM NOT. AND THEY TOLD HIM ALL THE WORDS OF JOSEPH, WHICH HE HAD SAID UNTO THEM: AND WHEN HE SAW THE WAGONS WHICH JOSEPH HAD SENT TO CARRY HIM, THE SPIRIT OF JACOB THEIR FATHER REVIVED: AND ISRAEL SAID, IT IS ENOUGH: JOSEPH MY SON IS YET ALIVE: I WILL GO AND SEE HIM BEFORE I DIE.

Our text conducts us into the midst of this family scene. How is every thing changed, transformed! Joseph's brothers talk no longer of the cold, rough-spoken, Egyptian lord of the country.* Their only speech is of their brother. "JOSEPH IS YET ALIVE!" The old man, Jacob, no longer bowed down by grief, no longer weeping and childless.† No: joy dwells again in his heart, he is revived, grown young again—a rich, a happy father. It is enough. "JOSEPH MY SON IS YET ALIVE!" We will enquire somewhat more closely what preceded this happy event, and how it came to pass; and the greatness and loveliness of human virtue will be placed before us.

You shall contemplate them in four pictures, that you may learn to imitate them, my beloved hearers.

Every virtue, my friends, if it merits the name of

* Gen. xlii. 30. † Ibid. xlv. 28.

virtue, may be called great, is actually great; for man, born of woman, can exercise none without effort and self-control. But every action is not necessarily lovely; for its greatness is often not of such a nature, as to render it attractive and interesting to our feelings. I am not now thinking of such actions as are performed by conquerors and governors, and are termed great, by the mass. Flatterers, in these cases, generally give the tone, and history unfortunately remains its echo, until time and experience have pronounced upon them, a more impartial judgment. The actions I mean, are called great by the good and right-minded, in consequence of their intrinsic worth; but the manner in which they are performed is devoid of that gentleness and grace that gain all hearts and compel the coldest natures to confess 'The deed is noble, is beautiful, a great soul speaks in it, its outward form is also pleasing and attractive.' Virtue in this garb is seldom found among men of the present day. We will seek then for such examples of virtue, among the dead, among those who in death live eternally. I will first show you the virtue of filial fidelity and affection. The incident of the stolen silver cup has reconducted the Patriarch's sons to Joseph's palace; there they wait in trembling expectation of what is to come, not suspecting how near to their hearts is the man who pronounced this judgment, "THE MAN IN WHOSE HAND THE CUP IS FOUND, HE SHALL BE MY SERVANT, AND AS FOR YOU, GET YOU UP IN PEACE UNTO YOUR FATHER!"* Dreadful sentence! for he, on whom the sad lot of servitude has fallen, is the darling of his aged

* Gen. xliv. 17.

father, the apple of his eye, without whom the old man cannot exist, for both lives are one. Here Judah comes near unto Joseph, and paints with a courage which innocence gives, with an eloquence full of nature and therefore the more heart-stirring, the unhappy situation of his old father,—how the aged man has already wept for years the loss of a dearly-loved son whom he believed to have been torn to pieces by beasts of prey,—how the old man awaited with anguish his youngest son's return, the only one of his beloved wife, who had early been removed from him. Genesis chap. xliv. ver. 18—34. "THEN JUDAH CAME NEAR UNTO HIM, AND SAID, OH, MY LORD, LET THY SERVANT, I PRAY THEE, SPEAK A WORD IN MY LORD'S EARS, AND LET NOT THINE ANGER BURN AGAINST THY SERVANT: FOR THOU ART EVEN AS PHARAOH. MY LORD ASKED HIS SERVANTS, SAYING, HAVE YE A FATHER, OR A BROTHER? AND WE SAID UNTO MY LORD, WE HAVE A FATHER, AN OLD MAN, AND A CHILD OF HIS OLD AGE, A LITTLE ONE: AND HIS BROTHER IS DEAD, AND HE ALONE IS LEFT OF HIS MOTHER, AND HIS FATHER LOVETH HIM. AND THOU SAIDST UNTO THY SERVANTS, BRING HIM DOWN UNTO ME, THAT I MAY SET MINE EYES UPON HIM. AND WE SAID UNTO MY LORD, THE LAD CANNOT LEAVE HIS FATHER: FOR IF HE SHOULD LEAVE HIS FATHER, HIS FATHER WOULD DIE. AND THOU SAIDST UNTO THY SERVANTS, EXCEPT YOUR YOUNGEST BROTHER COME DOWN WITH YOU, YE SHALL SEE MY FACE NO MORE. AND IT CAME TO PASS WHEN WE CAME UP UNTO THY SERVANT MY FATHER, WE TOLD HIM THE WORDS OF MY LORD. AND OUR FATHER SAID, GO AGAIN, AND BUY US A LITTLE FOOD. AND

WE SAID, WE CANNOT GO DOWN: IF OUR YOUNGEST BROTHER BE WITH US, THEN WILL WE GO DOWN: FOR WE MAY NOT SEE THE MAN'S FACE EXCEPT OUR YOUNGEST BROTHER BE WITH US. AND THY SERVANT MY FATHER SAID UNTO US, YE KNOW THAT MY WIFE BARE ME TWO SONS: AND THE ONE WENT OUT FROM ME, AND I SAID, SURELY HE IS TORN IN PIECES, AND I SAW HIM NOT SINCE: AND IF YE TAKE THIS ALSO FROM ME, AND MISCHIEF BEFALL HIM, YE SHALL BRING DOWN MY GRAY HAIRS WITH SORROW TO THE GRAVE. NOW, THEREFORE, WHEN I COME TO THY SERVANT MY FATHER, AND THE LAD BE NOT WITH US; SEEING THAT HIS LIFE IS BOUND UP IN THE LAD'S LIFE; IT SHALL COME TO PASS, WHEN HE SEETH THAT THE LAD IS NOT WITH US, THAT HE WILL DIE: AND THY SERVANTS SHALL BRING DOWN THE GRAY HAIRS OF THY SERVANT OUR FATHER WITH SORROW TO THE GRAVE. FOR THY SERVANT BECAME SURETY FOR THE LAD UNTO MY FATHER, SAYING, IF I BRING HIM NOT UNTO THEE, THEN I SHALL BEAR THE BLAME TO MY FATHER FOR EVER. NOW, THEREFORE, I PRAY THEE, LET THY SERVANT ABIDE INSTEAD OF THE LAD A BONDMAN TO MY LORD; AND LET THE LAD GO UP WITH HIS BRETHREN. FOR HOW SHALL I GO UP TO MY FATHER, AND THE LAD BE NOT WITH ME? LEST PERADVENTURE I SEE THE EVIL THAT SHALL COME ON MY FATHER."

O enumerate all the sublime examples of voluntary self-sacrifice which ancient and modern history presents; display all the sacrifices made by Greeks and Romans to friendship and love, you will find none worthier, none

more exalted. To redeem his word, to spare his aged father sorrow and suffering, Judah, himself a husband and a father, would renounce all that is dearest, would never again behold his native soil, his home, would never again press his wife, his children, to his bosom, would remain in his brother's stead, a slave in a strange land. Is this virtue exalted? and yet with what simplicity is it exercised! How little does Judah think but that every child must thus act! O ye sons and daughters who have promised your parents, or have vowed unto yourselves, to do this, to leave that undone, or that the guilt should be upon your own head, look well at this model; ask yourselves if you resemble it, if you have kept your word, if you would be capable of performing a similar, nay a much smaller sacrifice, in order not to bring your parent's gray head down with sorrow to the grave;—to give up a wish, a plan of pleasure, a passion, an impure attachment, a mistaken course? Frivolous and unhappy brothers and sisters, step hither, ponder well, whether you have ever caused your parents' hearts to bleed, whether sorrow has worn furrows on their brow, whether sleep has fled their tearful eyes. Is this through any fault of yours? Then say, henceforward;—no! I cannot look on the grief of my beloved ones and see them weep, suffer, die! Be in your filial love, great and amiable as was the son of the Patriarch! But I spoke of two sons, the second is Joseph. We shall not leave him again, for gentler, sweeter society I cannot give you. Judah's moving words have not failed to produce due effect. What comes from the heart, goes to the heart; this was the foundation of all the eloquence of the ancients. To whatever

further proof Joseph might have wished to put his brothers, affection overpowers his resolve. The speaker has brought before him his home, his family, their distress, his father's grief, has told him how he is waiting, hoping, lamenting, dying. Then Joseph could not refrain himself (says the Bible), his heart was full; tears relieve it. "I AM JOSEPH. DOES MY FATHER YET LIVE?" More he could not utter, in giving vent to his oppressed feelings. This was his first thought, "DOES MY FATHER YET LIVE?" This occupied his whole soul. And after he had recovered his equanimity, what was nearest to his heart? "HASTE YE, AND GO UP TO MY FATHER, AND SAY UNTO HIM, THUS SAITH THY SON JOSEPH. GOD HATH MADE ME LORD OF ALL EGYPT; COME DOWN UNTO ME, TARRY NOT. AND THOU SHALT DWELL IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN, AND THOU SHALT BE NEAR UNTO ME, AND THY CHILDREN, AND THY CHILDREN'S CHILDREN, AND THY FLOCKS AND THY HERDS, AND ALL THAT THOU HAST, AND THERE WILL I NOURISH THEE. AND YE SHALL HASTE AND BRING MY FATHER DOWN HITHER." See, my beloved friends, a noble, a righteous son acts thus. Joseph occupies a high station, is the lord of the country. His father, an humble shepherd, sinks in poverty, in the years of famine. How does the son act? Does he merely send presents? Does he merely promise support? Is he ashamed of his simple father? Is he satisfied with knowing that he is happy at a distance? No, no! "COME DOWN UNTO ME, TARRY NOT. THOU SHALT BE NEAR UNTO ME. I MYSELF WILL NOURISH THEE. HASTE, AND BRING HITHER MY FATHER."

Sons and daughters, who have the enviable lot of being able to repay your parents by your conduct, and thus to discharge a small portion of the heavy debt incurred to them, who have it in your power to cheer the evening of their days, to render it happier and freer from care, step hither, contemplate this image and ask yourselves if you resemble it! Have we indeed to warn you, to ask you, to conjure you to support your parents, to supply them with food, clothing, and shelter? Children who require to be driven to do this—no! such unworthy creatures are not to be found among us. Do you think that in the religion of the Israelite, it was deemed necessary to command a child to nourish his parent? Its followers were not considered so base. "HONOUR THY FATHER AND MOTHER," such was its divine command. Therefore I do ask you, if you offer to your parents besides mere maintenance, your whole hearts, pure affection, unconditional obedience, kindest distinction? Or has the proffered assistance the wounding character of alms-giving? Are you ashamed of them, of their simplicity, of their imperfect education? Art thou ashamed of thy old mother, thou gaily-attired daughter? Art thou ashamed of thy grey-haired father, thou youth with studied dress and manners? Are you ashamed of your parents, because they speak not, walk not, act not, peradventure sin not, as you do? Come hither, listen to Joseph's words, mark Joseph's deeds. Be children, be men, and give to your filial love a more amiable manner, a nobler character!

Side by side with filial, we may place brotherly love; for also such love is sweet and lovely to behold. We

will consider hereafter, whether Joseph's brothers had injured and offended him. You are not so strange to the world, as not to know that, unfortunately, brothers but too often act in the least brotherly manner. How oft is the pious exclamation, "BEHOLD HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS, WHEN BROTHERS DWELL TOGETHER," a righteous wish, and nothing more! Still worse is it, when they have dwelt far apart for years, when they have long been as strangers one to another, and when perhaps their father's grave must serve as the point of reunion. They meet unanimously for the purpose of burying their father, and dividing the inheritance. But what causes the most complete division, and erects as impassable a barrier between two brothers, as bigotry and religious pride between two individuals of different creeds, is difference of position. The one brother rich, the other poor; the one great, the other obscure; the one exalted, the other humble; the one having formed brilliant connections in the great world, the other standing in relation to no one save his God; the one a noble, the other scarcely a citizen. Now fancy the rich, distinguished, exalted, much-considered, noble brother, to be visited by the poor, obscure, unknown, and friendless brother, in the midst of all his splendour; how great will be the rich man's embarrassment! If he deny him not, which his heart perhaps will not allow him to do, he does not receive him joyfully, he gives, he spends, he bestows on him gold and silver, glittering coin, the mantle of sin; gives him much, will give him more, if he will not lay further claim to the relationship, if he will go speedily on his way. Joseph's brethren would never have discovered their brother in the governor, the

lord of the land of Egypt. He makes himself known unto them, that is little. He overwhelms them with gifts, that is little; but he says unto them, as he said unto his father, "NEAR ME YE SHALL DWELL," and not under an assumed name: no, as his brothers, he conceals it not! "AND HE FELL UPON HIS BROTHER BENJAMIN'S NECK AND WEPT. MOREOVER, HE KISSED ALL HIS BRETHREN, AND WEPT UPON THEM. AND THE FAME THEREOF WAS HEARD IN PHARAOH'S HOUSE, SAYING, JOSEPH'S BROTHERS ARE COME." Ye cold and hard-hearted beings, who have lain on the bosom of one mother, step hither and see whether you behold yourselves reflected in Joseph, or whether you belong to those, who exclaim in their cold-heartedness, "AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?" Do you belong to those, of whom the Psalmist says, "A BROTHER DOES NOT REDEEM HIS BROTHER, NONE GIVES TO GOD HIS RANSOM."* Be men, be brothers! listen to the voice of feeling, of conscience, of religion, of her who commands; וְחֵי אָחִיךָ עִמָּךְ; LET THY BROTHER DWELL WITH THEE! Fraternal love is an inestimable treasure. Fraternal love adorns prosperity, and comforts us in adversity. Feel it, experience it, and give to your brotherly love a larger scope, a higher character, a gentler, sweeter form.

I direct your attention, in the next place, to the forgiving and forgiven brothers. An ancient Israelite sage relates the following parable:† "When God desired

* Psalm xlix. 8.

† In Midrash Rabbah (the great book of Parables).

to create man, Truth came before the Almighty's throne and said, 'Create him not, for he will profane life by deceit.' 'Create him not,' said Justice, 'for he will destroy the beautiful world by unrighteousness.' 'Create him not,' said Peace, 'for he will injure himself and others, by war.' Then Mercy came before the all-loving Father, and prayed—'Create him, O Father! create him; for if he err, if he sin, Thou wilt pardon him, for Thy mercy is greater than his sin.'" You owe your existence, O man, to mercy, be then yourself merciful. Pardon, forgive those who have injured or offended you. We generally hear and read, that to pardon is difficult, and that because it is difficult, it is divine. I cannot, my friends, coincide entirely in this opinion. There are many, not particularly distinguished by virtue, who can forgive; but how is that forgiveness granted, in how unamiable a manner is the good deed done, how deeply do they make the poor transgressor feel his inferiority! What do they not say! what must not the pardoned hear! 'Oh, they should not like to be in his place; they would not share his feelings; they leave him to God and his own conscience.' In this, or a similar manner, they place before the offender, an image in which his conduct is delineated, his offences clearly reflected, and perhaps magnified. Such forgiveness is not difficult, for the pride of the offended party is thereby soothed and nourished; he gains more than he loses. If God can reward us, for thus heaping coals of fire on an adversary's head, I know not; this I know, he who would imitate God, must forgive freely and entirely, must forget the past, must exercise self-denial. Look at Joseph. When he had uttered the remarkable words,

"I AM JOSEPH; DOES MY FATHER YET LIVE?" his brothers stood mute and abashed around him, their silence indicated the shame, the repentance which this discovery had wrought in them. Had Joseph allowed them to remain in this state, had he humbled them, truly his forgiveness would not have been divine, and his reward would not have been great. How does he pardon? As soon as he perceived their state of feeling, he said unto them, "COME NEAR UNTO ME, I PRAY; I AM JOSEPH, YOUR BROTHER, WHOM YE SOLD INTO EGYPT. NOW, THEREFORE, BE NOT GRIEVED OR ANGRY AT YOURSELVES THAT YE SOLD ME HITHER; FOR GOD DID SEND ME BEFORE YOU TO PRESERVE LIFE; AND GOD SENT ME BEFORE YOU TO PRESERVE TO YOU A POSTERITY IN THE EARTH, AND TO SAVE YOUR LIVES BY A GREAT DELIVERANCE. SO NOW IT WAS NOT YOU THAT SENT ME HITHER, BUT GOD."*

Tears and kisses must seal the bond of reconciliation and love. Not a single reproach, no exhortation to repentance, nothing humiliating is uttered. They shall not think of the past, the offenders shall not offer any excuses, for the offended excuses them. He diverts their recollection from a deed, which they could not remember without blushing. "IT WAS NOT YOU THAT SENT ME HITHER, BUT GOD. Thus he gives a totally different character to their action. How can they reproach themselves with a deed, which has become the source whence so much happiness has flowed, which has

* Gen. xlv. 4, 5, 7.

transformed him into a happy Son, Brother, and Prince?

See, such pardon is divine, is great, is worthy of love, is love itself. Love greater, purer than this, cannot dwell in the breast of man. O ye who have enemies among men, among brothers, come hither, come hither: pause awhile before this image; and, as ye are men, as ye are Israelites, as ye are children of the Most High, stretch out to each other the hand of fellowship and with your hand give also your heart. Shew yourselves to be great, shew yourselves to be humane, prove yourselves to be God-like, worthy of love. Joseph presses those to his bosom who wished to kill him, becomes their benefactor, their blessing, and the greatest of all his joys is, that he can pardon truly, purely, entirely. Go, imitate, feel this holy joy as it was felt by that divine spirit.

We have contemplated the separate figures, my friends, we will now combine them, the son, the brother, the forgiving brother, and with these we will recollect the statesman: how worthily he fulfilled the various duties of this relation, until the end of his life. All the individual figures are joined in one picture. It is the fourth which this great and good man furnishes, who accomplishes in all things all that he ought to do: and therefore, my friends, his life must be fraught with instruction for us all, but especially for such among you, as fancy it is with human morals as with human knowledge, and that as we can only excel in one, or, at most, in two sciences, as we cannot make great progress in many subjects at once, so it is impossible for us to fulfil

all the duties enjoined on us by the moral law. Ye are in error, beloved friends, know that the heart is greater than the head. Our knowledge here below is piecemeal, our actions need not be so, they can form one great, one pure, one admirable whole. Why then do we herein stand so low? One among us is a good and dutiful son, but he leaves much to be desired in his conduct as a brother; another is an affectionate brother, but may be reproached with derelictions from the path of virtue as a husband; the third is true to his wife, but pays little or perhaps no heed to the obligations of a father; a fourth acts kindly and justly in his house, but shows a conscience not of the tenderest in his commercial dealings: a fifth does the reverse, out of his domestic circle excellent, great, amiable, delightful, in his house a tyrant, a tormentor. There are also, (who has not observed such?) many women who fulfil all the external relations of life with the most amiable punctuality, but neglect many duties in their domestic circle, which their all-important office enjoins on them. Can this be called virtue? Can it be termed amiable virtue? No! in virtue exists no such division, no such patchwork. And it is permitted unto man to become a whole, a beautiful whole, it is given unto him to attain to excellence in all virtues! What are we without this uniformity? Caricatures. The one part beautiful, regular, the other irregular, disgusting. We meet with many, too many such inconsistencies in life, as well in individuals as in whole communities. If the state of their schools is satisfactory, that of their places of worship is in the highest degree defective. If the synagogues are tolerably good, their establishments for education are lamentably faulty. But thus the man,

the community should not remain. Step hither, look at Joseph's image, and learn to become a beautiful whole.

If we have any thing to learn in this respect from the man whom I have depicted unto you, let those above all come hither, who have an especial superabundance of excuses and evasions, in all matters connected with their moral elevation. Joseph nullifies them all—all. You know the situation he occupies; he stands on slippery ground, he lives in a court, amid riches and superfluity, (the most dangerous enemies of virtue,) he devotes his time to the affairs of state. Are not all these so many obstacles to his actively working out his moral completeness? And yet he fulfils all the demands of virtue, he is in all things that which he ought to be. The sensual renders not him sensual, the worldly renders him not worldly. What can be said of so many among you, that would excuse your inferiority, your weakness, your defects, by attributing them to the worldly spirit, the worldly temptations of your position as men of the world, who would wash yourselves clean with the uncleanness of the world around, who would offer as an apology, your situation, your connections, your class; who would plead as your excuse, (and this is heard most frequently in a commercial town,) your business, your professional duties, and would make them the altar of atonement, on which to heap all your own transgressions. The Bible relates of Joseph "ALL COUNTRIES CAME TO EGYPT, AND HE SOLD." How pure, how great, how high-minded, how amiable do we find him! Truly, merchants, traders need not lose their moral development: traders need not grovel in the mire, merchants need not kneel before

the golden calf, and worship it to their own destruction. A trader need not forget his human destination in the man of business. He need not do it: if he does so, it is his will, his choice. Woe unto him, that nothing else, nothing better, nothing more worthy of love is his object! Did he seek it, he could attain it, for man's will can effect much. He who says he cannot—he will not.

II. I have completed my picture. I will add only a few words, in order to point out the way by which our virtue may attain to like greatness and loveliness. Your actions must be founded on piety. God must be their soul. That he was the soul of Joseph's actions must long since have become manifest to you. God dwells in his deeds, in his words. "HOW THEN CAN I DO THIS GREAT WICKEDNESS AND SIN AGAINST GOD?"* "THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM IS IN GOD." "IT IS NOT IN ME. GOD SHALL GIVE PHARAOH AN ANSWER OF PEACE.†" "GOD HATH MADE ME RULER OVER THE LAND OF EGYPT.‡" His piety discloses itself most strikingly in the words, "SO IT WAS NOT YOU THAT SENT ME HITHER, BUT GOD.§" Do you know many happy human beings who ascribe their happiness to God? They burn incense to their idols, to their prudence, their arrangements, their efforts, to themselves: therefore, are most men so full of self-esteem, of pretensions, so little, so unamiable. Even if they perform a good action, we are not at ease in their presence. Not God, but themselves are their primary

* Gen. xxxix. 9 † Gen. xli. 16.
‡ Gen. xlv. 8. § Ibid.

object, the reflection of heavenly light is wanting to their deeds, that pious unpretending simplicity without which nothing can be truly worthy of love. Joseph is great, is amiable in prosperity, in adversity. Why? He beholds everywhere the first cause of all events; therefore it is, that in the day of sorrow he is composed, therefore he is not discontented. It comes from the Lord, it must be good, therefore he desponds not. "EVEN THOUGH I BE CARRIED HITHER AND THITHER, IN THE NAME OF THE LORD I BEAR ALL." Thence it is that he loses not his modesty, his equanimity in prosperity; "ALL COMETH FROM THEE." "WHAT AM I, AND WHAT IS MY FATHER'S HOUSE, THAT THOU HAST BROUGHT ME UP HITHER?*" Therefore is he never tired, never satisfied with himself. "GOD HAS GIVEN ME MUCH, I MUST ACCOMPLISH MUCH. HOW CAN I REWARD HIM, WHO HAS DONE SUCH GREAT THINGS UNTO ME?" Do you now wonder that he is so great, so worthy of love, as a son, as a brother, in every relation of life? Yet it will be true, now and evermore, that such as do not love God, do not acknowledge God, show themselves humane and merciful towards their fellow-creatures, only so long as they perceive, that to do so will be for their own advantage. The source of all true love is on high, thence it must flow into thine heart, out of thine heart it must gush forth, bringing blessing with it, over the world; for he alone who is great, can do great deeds, he alone who has love, can give love.

When Joseph gives his brothers the escort on their

* 1 Chron. xvii. 16.

way to his father, he says unto them, "FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY." The excellent God-loving man Joseph, fears lest his brethren, (whose hearts are turned again unto him with brotherly love,) should make their former crime the subject of their conversation, and lest this should give rise to dispute, by which their journey would be embittered, and they should return to their father in a less affectionate temper of mind. We apply this exhortation to the matter under consideration, and we find in it a second mode, by which to give a higher and more amiable character to our virtue. We are on the way, on a journey, my brethren, we are fellow-travellers. Think of that, and forget not, that a gentle, friendly feeling towards mankind, and the affectionate treatment which results therefrom, are the surest means of smoothing and embellishing our common path through life. We are all bound on the same journey, on one and the same short journey. This surely is admonition sufficient to be very virtuous, and in our virtue to be amiable and full of love. We are all on our way to our Father; the rich and the poor, the exalted and the lowly, small and great, the learned and the ignorant, the worshippers, whether in church or in synagogue: all on the way. Why then do we embitter our journey, and render the path rough by hideous discord, by envy, by the plagues of enmity and jealousy? Verily this is not seemly for fellow-travellers. "FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY." Ye are all on the same way, ye cannot separate, ye cannot go hither and thither; ye cannot, ye must meet each other, follow each other; the Lord has so ordained it. If ye have fallen out, delay not, fellow-travellers, to grasp each other's hand

with friendly warmth, with brotherly love. Travellers can least dispense with gentleness. Fellow-travellers must aid each other, kindly, lovingly; they must be of one mind, one spirit, in bearing and forbearing, in rejoicing, in enjoying. The silken bonds of love must encircle them all, until they arrive at their journey's end, for the way is short and soon completed. Who will first reach the end of this journey—thou or I? Who knoweth this? But because we do not know it, therefore be unto all in whose company thou hast to perform thy journey, as kind, as affectionate as possible. How? Should you not then, youths and maidens, tend your fathers and mothers with the most unremitting care, with the tenderest fidelity and affection, seeing that you know not how soon the journey will be ended, you know not if they will longer tarry with you, or you with them? Husbands and wives, should you not with affectionate constancy watch over, and build up your house, since you know not in how few years, nay, in how few months, days, weeks, hours, the journey of life, the pilgrimage of the one or the other, may be closed? Men, brothers, Brothers, men! Should you not, then, meet each other as much like men as possible? Should you not, then, do all that in you lies, use your best powers, while ye yet go hand in hand with each other, to create, to heal, to improve, to benefit, to bless, while each of you can yet behold the other's countenance, while ye yet may say, each unto the other, 'We are yet here; and in a little while here, here, will nothing be left for us to do. Should you not, then, say to each other, 'What still remains for us to do, soon, now, in the kindest, most affectionate manner, will we perform it.'

O verily say it in the morning, in the evening. We are on the way, on the same path, on a brief journey; to us it shall be a holy law to serve our fellow travellers, variously, kindly, lovingly, to twine for our brows a garland formed of many great, many lovely actions, a crown which shall never fade, which we will place on our heads when we bid each other farewell, when we go to our long home, when we go to our Father, who will receive us all, as a friend, as a father receives his children.

Amen! Amen!

SERMON VII.

MANNA IN THE WILDERNESS, OR DAILY BREAD.

EXODUS xvi. 4—28.

TRULY it is but little that man requires here below, for few and numbered are his days upon earth; yet Thou givest us, all gracious and merciful Father, more, abundantly more, than we can desire or enjoy. Thou commandest the firmament, and the doors of heaven are opened at Thy word! Thou commandest the earth, and she spreads her rich blessings before the children of men. Yes, Father! Thou givest more than we can desire, more than we can enjoy. Yet, alas! in the midst of this abundance there is destitution, and in the midst of riches, poverty. We behold one languishing in misery, another perishing from want: we see a father weep, we hear a mother sigh, for their children are asking for bread, and tears are their only food. Not Thine is the fault, O God! but our's, our's alone. Thou givest, and we know not how to receive; Thou lavishest Thy blessings, and we know not how to distribute them; Thou showest us Thy goodness, and we refuse to imitate it, we will not feel how blessed it is to give, to assist, and to make others happy. Grant that

we come not before Thee in vain this day. Grant that we may understand the depths of Thy goodness, which careth for us so wondrously; grant that we may receive it worthily, imitate it worthily, and use it worthily. May the words of Thy divine teaching be a blessing to us and our children, so that they may light us on the path of life for ever and ever. Amen.

You will find the subject of our present discourse, or, rather, the discourse itself, in Exodus xvi. 4—28.

THEN SAID THE LORD UNTO MOSES, BEHOLD, I WILL RAIN BREAD FROM HEAVEN FOR YOU; AND THE PEOPLE SHALL GO OUT AND GATHER A CERTAIN RATE EVERY DAY, THAT I MAY PROVE THEM, WHETHER THEY WILL WALK IN MY LAW, OR NOT. AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT ON THE SIXTH DAY THEY SHALL PREPARE THAT WHICH THEY BRING IN; AND IT SHALL BE TWICE AS MUCH AS THEY GATHER DAILY. AND MOSES AND AARON SAID UNTO ALL THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AT EVEN, THEN SHALL YE KNOW THAT THE LORD HATH BROUGHT YOU OUT FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT. AND IN THE MORNING, THEN SHALL YE SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD; FOR THAT HE HEARD YOUR MURMURINGS AGAINST THE LORD: AND WHAT ARE WE, THAT YE MURMUR AGAINST US? AND MOSES SAID, WHEN THE LORD GIVETH YOU IN THE EVENING FLESH TO EAT, AND IN THE MORNING BREAD TO THE FULL; WHEN THE LORD HEARD YOUR MURMURINGS WHICH YE MURMURED AGAINST HIM: AND WHAT ARE WE? YOUR MURMURING IS

NOT AGAINST US, BUT AGAINST THE LORD. AND MOSES SPAKE UNTO AARON, SAY UNTO ALL THE CONGREGATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, COME NEAR BEFORE THE LORD: FOR HE HATH HEARD YOUR MURMURINGS. AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS AARON SPAKE UNTO THE WHOLE CONGREGATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND THEY TURNED TOWARDS THE WILDERNESS, AND, BEHOLD, THE GLORY OF THE LORD APPEARED IN A CLOUD. AND THE LORD SPAKE UNTO MOSES, SAYING, I HAVE HEARD THE MURMURING OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: SPEAK UNTO THEM, SAYING, AT EVEN YE SHALL EAT FLESH, AND IN THE MORNING YE SHALL BE SATISFIED WITH BREAD; AND YE SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD. AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT AT EVEN THE QUAILS CAME UP, AND COVERED THE CAMP: AND IN THE MORNING THE DEW LAY ROUND ABOUT THE CAMP. AND WHEN THE DEW THAT LAY WAS GONE UP, BEHOLD, UPON THE FACE OF THE WILDERNESS THERE LAY A SMALL ROUND THING, AS SMALL AS THE HOAR FROST ON THE GROUND. AND WHEN THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SAW IT, THEY SAID ONE TO ANOTHER, WHAT IS IT? FOR THEY WIST NOT WHAT IT WAS. AND MOSES SAID UNTO THEM, THIS IS THE BREAD WHICH THE LORD HATH GIVEN YOU TO EAT. THIS IS THE THING WHICH THE LORD HATH COMMANDED, GATHER OF IT EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS EATING, AN OMER FOR EVERY HEAD, ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF YOUR PERSONS; TAKE YE EVERY MAN FOR THEM WHICH ARE IN HIS TENT. AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DID SO, AND GATHERED

SOME MORE, SOME LESS. AND WHEN THEY DID METE IT WITH AN OMER, HE THAT GATHERED MUCH, HAD NOTHING OVER, AND HE THAT GATHERED LITTLE, HAD NO LACK; THEY GATHERED EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS EATING. AND MOSES SAID TO THEM, LET NO MAN LEAVE OF IT TILL THE MORNING. AND THEY HEARKENED NOT UNTO MOSES; BUT SOME OF THEM LEFT OF IT UNTIL THE MORNING, AND IT BRED WORMS, AND STANK; AND MOSES WAS WROTH WITH THEM. AND THEY GATHERED IT EVERY MORNING, EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS EATING: BUT WHEN THE SUN WAXED HOT, IT MELTED. AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT ON THE SIXTH DAY THEY GATHERED TWICE AS MUCH BREAD, TWO OMERS FOR ONE MAN: AND ALL THE RULERS OF THE CONGREGATION CAME AND TOLD MOSES. AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, THIS IS THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH SAID, TO-MORROW IS THE REST OF THE HOLY SABBATH UNTO THE LORD: BAKE THAT WHICH YE WILL BAKE TO-DAY, AND SEETHE THAT YE WILL SEETHE; AND THAT WHICH REMAINETH OVER LAY UP FOR YOU TO BE KEPT UNTIL THE MORNING. AND THEY LAID IT UP TILL THE MORNING, AS MOSES BADE: AND IT DID NOT STINK, NEITHER WAS THERE ANY WORM THEREIN. AND MOSES SAID, EAT THAT TO-DAY; FOR TO-DAY IS A SABBATH UNTO THE LORD: TO-DAY YE SHALL NOT FIND IT IN THE FIELD. SIX DAYS YE SHALL GATHER IT; BUT ON THE SEVENTH DAY, WHICH IS THE SABBATH, IN IT THERE SHALL BE NONE. AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT THERE WENT OUT SOME OF THE PEOPLE ON THE SEVENTH DAY FOR TO GATHER, AND THEY FOUND NONE.

I have read sixteen verses from the portion for the week, which comprehends nearly the whole of the sixteenth chapter. The ancients recommended this portion of Scripture to our daily consideration; they must, consequently, have discovered much in this very simple narrative that is, and must ever continue to be, of great importance to us. It treats, indeed, of nothing but daily bread, and *"man liveth not by bread alone." But we must remember, that our daily bread is closely connected with our daily morals; that the moral state of man is powerfully influenced by the manner in which he obtains and enjoys his daily bread, and by his position being one of plenty or of want. And we shall then find, that when we view in this light the passage which I have read, it gains in significance, although it treats of nothing but daily bread. But in what, then, consists its true importance? This question must frequently occur to every thinking man. How does it happen, that with all the inexhaustible riches with which God has furnished nature for our nourishment and preservation, so much want and insufficiency are seen, so many complaints of misery and poverty are made among men? The words which I have read to you, while they call our attention to the manner in which God provided sustenance for our forefathers, and to their conduct in receiving His bounty, give a direct answer to the preceding question. This answer is given to us also, my friends, and we shall be great gainers if we hear and understand it, and lay it well to heart. May God grant this who showeth us the wonders of His word! Amen.

* Deut. viii. 3.

We are told, in the first place, that Israel was fed and satisfied in the wilderness in a miraculous manner; and that, at the time of the miracle, God spake thus to our distrustful and vacillating forefathers: "AT EVENING YE SHALL EAT FLESH, AND IN THE MORNING YE SHALL BE SATISFIED WITH BREAD: AND YE SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD."

Israel numbered, according to the Scriptures, six hundred thousand men able to bear arms: it is easy, therefore, to calculate that the whole number of souls amounted at least to two millions, and these were provided with food during forty successive years. Read this, and ask yourselves, 'How doth God nourish and sustain me and thee?' He showeth Himself yet richer in wonders now, this day, every day. The number of our ancestors in the wilderness was considerable; but what is the most populous nation, in comparison with the inhabitants of a single continent, or with those of this globe? Yet have not these been all fed for thousands of years, from the one large open table, which the Father's hand keeps constantly prepared, and plentifully supplied for them? "AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT AT EVEN THE QUAILS CAME UP, AND COVERED THE CAMP, AND IN THE MORNING THE MANNA LAY UPON THE DEW." Lord, how wonderful was this! Yet what were the Israelites in the desert, when compared with the countless millions who daily, at morning, noon, and evening, and still oftener, come and ask, and seek, and find, and are fed by His bounty? Our ancestors were supplied with the most nutritious food, with bread and flesh. But more wonderful still is the ample provision, which

God maketh for us. Can the most lively imagination form any clear conception of the stores which He distributeth amongst us? One kind of grain, one species of animal, were bestowed on our forefathers; but, how many varieties of both are given for our use. The vegetable kingdom with its innumerable productions, the animal creation with its millions of tribes, are not these our store-houses? It may be thought wonderful that one article of food could be prepared in so many ways, as the Scripture tells us.* "AND THE PEOPLE WENT ABOUT, AND GATHERED IT, AND GROUND IT IN MILLS, AND BEAT IT IN A MORTAR, AND BAKED IT IN PANS, AND MADE CAKES OF IT, AND THE TASTE OF IT WAS AS THE TASTE OF FRESH OIL." Yet what is this when compared with the arts which we have at command, for improving, and thereby multiplying, the simplest substances that afford food to man? O what fulness! what riches! what generosity! what inexhaustible provision are here! and all from Him, to whom ye have given nothing, to whom ye never can make any return. With such thoughts as these can ye remain callous, can ye enjoy without emotion, or can ye ever be faint-hearted and desponding? Can you ever say, "Who will provide for me and mine?" Can you thus speak, beholding as you do this abundance, can you indeed? Yes, ye can; for ye are faint-hearted and desponding. But with whom is the blame? With God, or man, with Him or yourselves? And here we are met by the question suggested in our introduction, "Whence come the many and bitter complaints of dis-

* Numbers xi. 8.

tress and want, that are heard on all sides?" Surely poverty and want should not even be named amongst children of so rich a parent, who is ever giving, who gives liberally, and who is never weary of giving. The words that promise a time, "WHEN THERE SHALL BE NO POOR AMONG YOU, FOR THE LORD SHALL GREATLY BLESS THEE,"* ought long ago to have been fulfilled throughout the whole world. This is far from being the case. Wherefore is it thus? Read the passage respecting the manna, therein we find the answer. "BEHOLD I WILL RAIN BREAD FROM HEAVEN FOR YOU, AND THE PEOPLE SHALL GO OUT, AND GATHER A CERTAIN RATE EVERY DAY; GATHER OF IT EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS EATING." It would have been a light thing to the Almighty, to have rained the manna before each man's tent; this would have suited well the indolent tempers of those, who had said not long before to Moses, "WOULD TO GOD THAT WE HAD DIED BY THE HAND OF THE LORD IN THE LAND OF EGYPT WHEN WE SAT BY THE FLESH POTS," but the Lord did not do thus, "I WILL GIVE BREAD FROM HEAVEN, BUT THEY SHALL GO OUT AND GATHER IT UP."

Observe: all are to go, to go out, to look about, bestir themselves, even the rulers (נשיאי העדה), and early in the morning too (בבקר). Here we perceive the cause of so much want in the midst of so much plenty. We do not understand that we are to work, we do not all work, we do not work sufficiently. The call to labour is universal; let no one claim for himself the right to be idle, no man, not even the great man, not even

* Deut. xv. 4.

the ruler, no age, no sex. God has left no one without talent or power of some sort: and talent and power must be used, for to this end they were given. And because they were granted us for this end, there is no sin that produces so many others as idleness, nor is there one which is such a declared enemy to every species of good and improvement. All other vicious influences are, we find, counteracted by opposing virtues; thus, Avarice strives with Benevolence; impure desires are opposed to Chastity; Pride arrays itself against Humility, but Idleness declares war against all virtue. Is there a single virtue that can be exercised without trouble, without effort? No: virtue can never be purchased so easily. Idleness stands in the way of every virtue, and in alliance with every sin. Believe me, my friends, the nets of the spoiler are especially prepared for the slothful; and in the unemployed moment they are cast around him. Thus, not only the weak, the godless, and the foolish, but also the strong, the pious, and the wise are ensnared. When was the hero, Sampson, bereft of his strength? Not while he was combating the enemy on the field of glory, but while he was giving himself up to indolence in the arms of Delilah. When did the holy poet, David, fall into sin? When he was leading an idle and luxurious life, instead of duly heeding the affairs of his kingdom. When was the wisdom of Solomon brought to shame? Was it while he was governing his realm, and diligently superintending the building of the temple? O no; it was when he began to resign himself to pleasure and to effeminate repose. Idleness induced the love of strange women, and that love led to idolatry. We have said that in nature there are abun-

dant provision and great riches. Yet we have never made the most of her stores. Her streams would flow yet more copiously, were not so many hands folded in idleness, were not so many men under the delusion that they were not born to labour. Their maxim is, 'By the sweat of others, ye shall eat and be filled.' Nor is it merely among the wealthy that idlers are found: far too many there are among the poor also. The entrance to God's rich treasure-house can be opened only by our activity. By useful industry alone can we discover, and draw from the hidden stream of plenty, which He hath concealed from the eye of the sluggard. Woe to the indolent man who desires to be cared for, without being worth the care; who would fain enjoy, but if it cost him effort, will not prepare enjoyment for himself. Yet this is the character of many, even among Israelites. The reproach that we are averse to labour, is not wholly without foundation. We have not yet taken the ancient teaching so well to heart, but that we sometimes refuse the common and more arduous kinds of work, and say, in a tone of pride, 'I am of noble origin! I am descended from the priestly race; my ancestors were great men!' Well then, be a priest yourself. The whole world is the temple of God; in it ye must serve, and labour. Wherever He has placed you, it is there that you are to serve Him and do His work. We cannot all be high priests who enter the temple only once a year. There dwelt in Israel of old but one High Priest. Were your ancestors great and noble? Then be ye also great and noble. Idleness makes a man neither one nor the other. It is the work that he has done in the world, that testifies of his greatness and nobleness. Desire less, work more. "THE

DESIRE OF THE SLOTHFUL KILLETH HIM; FOR HIS HANDS REFUSE TO LABOUR,"* says a wise and pious adage. Many among you think that labour is not thus important. You arm yourselves with holy weapons, and tell me, in the words of Scripture, that †"THE RACE IS NOT TO THE SWIFT, NOR THE BATTLE TO THE STRONG, NOR YET BREAD TO THE WISE, NOR RICHES TO MEN OF UNDERSTANDING." But let me tell you, that when swiftness is ineffectual, sitting still will avail you still less: if prudence fail to create riches, folly must wait yet longer without them; if a wise activity cannot earn bread, surely the contrary will never gain any. Hearken to the words of Scripture, in which I may reply unto you: ‡"The Lord's blessing is promised only in the work of thy hands, which thou doest." And again: "It shall be well with thee:" but only when "Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands."

Only let your powers be well understood, and turned to good account; then, my friends, poverty will no longer be your portion, and the lamentations now heard respecting it will cease. God is giving his stores from heaven; only go out and gather them, early in the morning too; go while your vigour is yet fresh and undiminished. I speak to you who are in the bloom of youth, to you who have reached the flower of manhood: go, be always active, always armed for work. Work early, my dear friends, while yet nothing compels you to work, wait not till you must work. Work because it is your will to work. The work which is done volun-

* Prov. xxi. 25. † Eccles. ix. 11. ‡ Deut. xiv. 29.

tarily, is always the most profitable, it brings the best harvest. Early, my friends, while your substance is yet unconsumed, while the sun is not too hot. We have known many persons who, as long as they had anything to live on, shunned labour, indulged in luxury, loved wine and perfumes, and cherished the delusion "that their handful of meal would never waste, nor their pitcher of oil fail;" and at last, when they found it empty, and not till then, did they go out to replenish it. This is wrong, my fellow men. Work early, while yet you have something; work early, before want has entered your houses: and it will not find easy entrance. Work, work all of you; work sufficiently, and the Lord will give to you as he gave to your forefathers. Poverty will never disappear till idleness is conquered.

If we know not how to work, we are quite as ignorant how we ought to enjoy. Here we have the second reason, why, in the midst of superfluity, so many bitter complaints of want are heard, so much actual want prevails. Look once more at our text, here we find, "AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DID SO, AND GATHERED, SOME MORE, SOME LESS." But when it came to the eating, "THEY MEASURED IT WITH AN OMER." A most significant incident. Strive then, labour hard, earn, and gather together; use all your powers, your every talent: wherefore not? God has put the striving and the working within you. You are to enlarge your circle of action, you are to increase your possessions, and widen your connections. "IN THE MORNING SOW THY SEED (as the wise man says), AND IN THE EVENING WITHHOLD NOT THY HAND; FOR THOU KNOWEST NOT

WHETHER SHALL PROSPER, THIS OR THAT, OR WHETHER BOTH SHALL BE ALIKE GOOD."* But when it comes to the enjoyment, O then measure with the omer of moderation. 'To attain moderation, is to reach the highest point in the art of life.' These words once formed the inscription of a heathen temple: would that they adorned the house of every Israelite, let me say, rather, the dwelling of every human being. For where moderation is wanting, there wealth and happiness will be wanting also. Be the property of the intemperate ever so considerable, be that man ever so rich, yet will he be poor; and where poverty exists, lamentations will be heard. Were the calculation possible, should we not perhaps have louder complaints and heavier sighs to put to the account of the rich, than of the poor? Be moderate, and you will be rich indeed. Your riches will ever increase, for your content will thus increase. Contentment knows neither sighs nor murmurs; she always has much—she has more than much, she has enough.

Thus far I have spoken to those whom I may call artificially poor, who are not really poor, but whose temper of mind deprives them of the advantages of affluence. I now address myself to you, who, according to your own opinions, can in no way be numbered with the rich. You doubtless imagine that you have much greater right to complain; but I say, that even you have no real cause for discontent. I would recommend you to cast a searching glance on your mode of living: say, do you then mete with the measure? Yes, but with what

* Eccles. xi. 6.

measure? The Lord knoweth what balances you use, with what kind of omer ye measure, its breadth and depth. And how do you measure, my friends? Truly while you are measuring and weighing your substance, you are always looking above yourselves; you cast your eyes upwards towards the heights, and fondly fancy you see nothing but pleasure-houses, magnificent palaces, gay gardens, and dazzling saloons. You imagine consequently, that you are needy, nay, all but destitute, and your bosom heaves deep sighs of self-compassion. But, my good friends, you should look downwards, whilst you are measuring, look into the valleys and the depths of life, look on the thousands, who every morning rise without the morsel of bread, which they would share with their children at the noontide and evening meal; look on the deserving poor who would labour, O how willingly! if any one would trust work to their hands; look on those who would fain struggle for a maintenance, if their hearts were not bleeding with recent sorrows; look on the widow and the orphan, on the forsaken and the exiled, who are destitute of food and clothing, and a prey to every species of wretchedness: then you will no longer place yourselves in the middling class, but you will deem yourselves rich, opulent. You will then never dream of complaining of want: on the contrary, you will praise God in a thousand hallelujahs, for what He hath given, as well as for what He hath withheld. Measure, my hearers, measure as your forefathers did; and then poverty will be less heard of and feared among you, for you will have learned to moderate your inclination to luxury, and to repress your love of show; you will be satisfied with what is conformable to your station in life,

without imitating the display and the grandeur of those, who are higher and richer than yourselves. Something we must grant to them, and surely this is little enough, my friends. And measure ye, also, whom it most particularly behoves to be moderate in all things: I mean you, ye mothers, wives, and mistresses of families. Call back to your houses that beneficent spirit of economy, which, alas! seems, of late years, to have abandoned that sex which it ought peculiarly to animate. You, especially, my dear sisters, who come to this place to gather your heavenly manna, be in this respect, a happy exception. O do not augment the number (great enough without you,) of those who, instead of avoiding all unnecessary outlay, yield only to a vain spirit of ostentation, and a love of fashion; who, shunning the quiet retirement in which they might become the gentle guardians of home, run in pursuit of tumultuous pleasures, and seem to vie with their husbands which shall take the greater share in the destruction of all domestic well-being. Let your's be distinction of another kind, ye daughters of Israel, learn to become the blessings of your homes. Surely, my dear friends, if we were all thus to live, thus to keep measure and use diligence, we should find the provision which the Giver of all blessings bestoweth on us, amply sufficient. O then the lips would forget their complainings, and the bosom its sighs, and the beautiful globe of God's earth, would be rich in all the joys of life!

But if this is to be universally realised, we would also learn how to distribute. Our not understanding this art, is the third reason why there is cause for so much com-

plaint of want and misery, among the children of men. It is the will of God that His gifts shall be divided unequally. Is it otherwise throughout all inanimate nature? How unfruitful and barren are some spots of earth, while others are luxuriant as paradise itself! How poor is one kind of tree in flowers and fruit, yet how richly and magnificently has God adorned another! Look into the intellectual world, how differently are His gifts apportioned there! There are many men in whom mind is scarcely to be discerned; in others, mind is continually present, it shows itself in every motion, speaks in every word, manifests itself in every glance. One man possesses a rich fund of wit and acuteness, another hardly knows such gifts even by name. Many are skilful in invention and discovery, being furnished with a sort of creative energy, while others must be content merely to copy, to imitate. We all know that a like arrangement prevails, with respect to bodily and worldly endowments. Now, neither the one nor the other can be the work of chance. Were the possession of intellectual gifts fortuitous, then might we as well declare the whole man to be fortuitous; for the intellect it is which constitutes the man. We might then indeed say further, that the world is a work of chance, for it is spirit which gives the world its form and stature. Would you call the distribution of worldly blessings accidental? I say again that this would be to ascribe to chance, all that belongs to humanity; for how much, how incalculably much depends on the possession of these very gifts! The change from riches to poverty, or the contrary, frequently induces a character totally different from that which the individual originally possessed. Heaven and hell have been gained by means

of poverty alone: how can anything be ascribed to chance, which brings with it consequences of such vital importance? No, my friends! surely I need not now explain to Israelites that it is the everlasting God, who maketh poor and maketh rich, who raiseth up, and who bringeth low. But why has He given so much to thee, and so little to me? This *why*, my friends, it is not given unto us to comprehend and to answer. Thus much only can we discover, as a general rule, that social life is a gainer in completeness and happiness, by the difference of endowments in different individuals: and knowing this we know enough. But we do not know this, or if we do, we act as though we knew it not.

I say again a poor man, a really needy person ought to be an uncommon thing, a rarity amongst us. Look again at our text, and learn what ye ought to do. "AND WHEN THEY DID METE IT WITH AN OMER, HE THAT GATHERD MUCH HAD NOTHING OVER, AND HE THAT GATHERED LITTLE HAD NO LACK; THEY GATHERED EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS EATING." Some commentators are of opinion, that this was the effect of a fresh miracle. The original text however, by no means requires such an interpretation. The following less wonderful, is perhaps the truer meaning. The whole store of manna, when collected, was laid together and divided by measure: then the families which had brought home too little in proportion to their numbers, received as much as they required from those who had an overplus; so that in accordance with this wise ordination, the superfluity of the one, was to supply the deficiency of the other. Behold, this it is which is wanting in our days;

therefore are so many well-grounded complaints heard, on the subject of want and poverty. Those to whom God has given plentifully, should do more than they now do, for those who possess but little; they should distribute their gifts more widely and more judiciously; they should be much more unwearied in assisting the needy, and soothing those who are in sorrow, in alleviating cares, stilling sighs, and silencing lamentation; they should meditate far more earnestly, how to establish an equilibrium between poverty and riches, between want and abundance. Then there would be no poor in the land: according to the will of God, there ought to be none.

Tell me, why has God given so much to you and so little to others? Is it that ye have deserved more than they? You cannot, with all your self-love, answer me in the affirmative. You well know, as I do, that there are many excellent persons in poverty, while many that are rich, are most unworthy. However deeply we may consider the subject, we cannot discover why you should revel in costly food, while others have nothing but dry bread; why you should be clothed in silks and purples, while others have scarcely a rag wherewith to protect their shivering bodies; why you must have your winter abodes and your summer retreats, while others have hardly the most miserable shed in which to dwell; why you every day leave so much food unconsumed, that it perishes, or as the Scripture expresses it in somewhat stronger language, (and it cannot be too strongly expressed,) that it becomes stinking and the worms creep out from it, whilst the poor man must cringe and creep, if he would obtain a paltry pittance from the opulent

miser. It is your fault, ye men of wealth and property, that so many human beings are sighing, and pining, and weeping. Nor is this all; it is your fault that so many, while they compare their lot with yours, doubt the Lord, and ask, is there indeed God above us? Is this reproof hard upon you? Then be less hard one to another, be more tender, gentler, kinder, better. Give willingly, give abundantly, give often, even as it is willingly, abundantly, and often given unto you.

Let your manner of giving be considerate and friendly, mingle not harshness with your benefits, and seek not to persuade yourselves that you are giving too much. Give reasonably and judiciously. Seek to eradicate poverty entirely, so that the land may be actually poor in poor. Look around you for families who need relief, for orphans who need education, for sick who need care, for wretches, while they may yet be rescued from the abyss of despair and sin. Go! cause the light of gladness to shine upon men, who have long forgotten what it is to smile. Rejoice in beholding sweet tears of joyful surprise flow from eyes, to which such tears have long been strangers. Go, and feel, if you are men, how great it is not to desire too much, while others have too little: the lamentations over human want and misery will then be no more uttered..

There is yet another and last reason, why there exists so much destitution in the midst of so much wealth. We know not how to estimate the good things of this world according to their real value. Neither the rich nor the poor understand this: the first are apt to over-

estimate vain pomp and show, the second, to set too high a value on money. The latter are, in some measure, to be excused for this. Whatever we do not possess, always appears to us more attractive, more lovely, and more valuable, than what is within our reach. I say, they may be in some measure excused, for I cannot defend them entirely, were it only for this reason, that there have been, and thank God, still are, poor men, too amply stored with inward riches, to feel very keenly the want of outward advantages. Now we can all of us earn these inward riches. The time is past indeed, when pious Israelites, as well as heathens, exulted in their poverty; yet the race is not extinct of those who, in the midst of penury, retain the inborn lofty pride of humanity; these feel too justly the nobleness of their own nature, to indulge in sighs and useless repinings. You will all admit, that the rich are apt to overrate the value of riches, and they also, are in some degree, excusable. Only consider what fine and flattering things are composed and written in honour of rich men; consider how their word is every where respected, and what numbers are constantly pressing around them, courting their favour, and their society. And wherefore? On account of their wealth. Surely it is not to be wondered at, if rich men adopt the idea that money is invaluable, 'is of power,' as the sage says, 'to render an unclean thing clean.' Add to this, the everlasting pushing and striving for the sake of accumulating more and more, and you will see that men can hardly fail to persuade themselves at last, that *"MONEY ANSWERETH

* Eccles. x. 19.

ALL THINGS." Now what is to be done to counteract a delusion so injurious, and to point out to both rich and poor, the real worth of all worldly advantages? It would have been difficult to discover a method; but that method has been disclosed to us by God. The same means which he commanded our ancestors to use in the wilderness, will be found excellent and efficacious for us also. Let us look again at our text: "SIX DAYS SHALL YE GATHER IT, BUT ON THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH." I speak unwillingly on this subject, because I find my admonitions are of so little avail. I almost think it would be easier to induce you to keep holy all the six working days, than the one sabbath. There are persons in our congregation who have, in all other respects, a ready and keen susceptibility to good impressions, and an honest desire of improvement, on whom God has bestowed so much, that truly they have no need to use the Sabbath as a working day; yet these persons cannot resolve on laying aside their business, even for one hour. Ought I to be silent on such a subject? I must not be silent; for I say unto you, the observance of the Sabbath is the most effectual means of making you attentive to the fact, that it is not for earth and her golden entrails only, that ye live and ought to live. Observe my brethren, that all our prophets, who teach in their discourses nothing but pure morality and the simple truths of religion, and who scarcely make mention of the ceremonial law,—all the prophets, I say, insist on the celebration of the Sabbath day. You cannot regard them, as being in the dark on such matters; would to God, that the enlightened among us possessed as much light! Neither can you class them with the Rabbis of

later times, who bestowed their attention on the outer shell of religion, loading the husk with ornament, and neglecting the kernel. The prophets in particular, strive to impress on men the worth of the kernel, and represent the shell as despicable and ridiculous without it. And these men insist on the solemnisation of the Sabbath. The greatest of them all, Isaiah, thus speaks,* "IF THOU TURN AWAY THY FOOT FROM THE SABBATH, FROM DOING THY PLEASURE ON MY HOLY DAY, AND CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT, THE HOLY OF THE LORD, HONOURABLE, AND SHALT HONOUR HIM, NOT DOING THINE OWN WAYS, NOR FINDING THINE OWN PLEASURE, NOR SPEAKING THINE OWN WORDS, THEN THOU SHALT DELIGHT THYSELF IN THE LORD, AND I WILL CAUSE THEE TO RIDE UPON THE HIGH PLACES OF THE EARTH." In your incessant striving after worldly aims, you must soon learn to imagine that you have the same lot, the same destination, as the beasts of burden. You, especially, my poorer friends, who pass the whole week in hard and mechanical labour, like your soulless half-brethren, may but too easily adopt this dangerous idea. And you too, ye rich men, will and must at last say unto silver, "Thou art my confidence, and to gold, behold thy Gods, O Israel!" GATHER DURING SIX DAYS, BUT ON THE SEVENTH IS THE SABBATH.' It is true, that I cannot say to you, as our text goes on to say, that "IN IT YE SHALL FIND NONE." Could I say this, I should at once have gained my point, for when ye shall find nothing on the seventh day, ye will leave off seeking soon enough. But you ought, with power of finding,

* Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

not to desire to find. For the sake of God, think you? No; I say unto you, but for your own sakes, that you may save the man within you, lest your animal nature gain the ascendancy. It was necessary that your ancestors should be compelled, like children, to do what was for their good. You should congratulate yourselves that you are no longer treated like children, by the Divine master who is educating you. Ye are men, and able to do that of your own free-will, which they were to do from compulsion. Your fathers gathered a double portion on the sixth day, that they might not want on the seventh. You, my more highly favoured friends, can during all the six days, be gathering manna for the seventh; and can thence on the sabbath, not only here in the sanctuary, but likewise in your domestic circles, feel yourselves higher beings in the scale of humanity. The sabbath is peculiarly the day on which you ought to look inwards, both to yourselves and to your families. Observe your sons and daughters; examine what advances they have made and are making, see what they are and what they will be, when you, my dear friends, stand by them no longer, but are gone to seek manna in other fields. It is on the sabbath that you can enjoy with your families, the intercourse of the soul, that communion of spirits, which, alas! is too rare a fruit, to many, a fruit entirely unknown. It is the sabbath and the sabbath only, which can bring this fruit to maturity. I am persuaded that if the rich and poor alike, would not permit the grasping world to rob them of this day, they would find its blessedness poured forth on every other day. You would then devote your refreshed energies to the right work, you would then learn to exercise and to value the virtue

of temperance. This day would teach you to consider well, the right way of giving and distributing the blessings which you have received. This is the very knowledge which we so especially want, and for want of which, the world abounds in poverty in the midst of riches. The poor man would learn better the dignity which belongs to him as man, and would refrain from sighing and craving for the most perishable of all earthly things; and the rich man would know, for he would have time to learn that he is indeed little, if riches be his all, and that his wealth can be valuable, only in proportion as he uses it to a good end, according to the will of God. Then, O then, would rich and great, good fortune and good deeds, be synonymous terms. Behold, then my friends, it would not be known whether you were to be accounted blessed for your riches or for your virtue. O God grant, that you and I may live to behold the approach of this blessed time!

Amen.

SERMON VIII.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MOSAIC RELIGION.

DEUTERONOMY iv. 5—10.

HOLY, holy, holy art Thou, Lord of Hosts! The earth is full of Thy glory! Thy children would fain bear a part in this chorus, hymned by seraphim. Full of Thy glory was the earth on this day; for on this day didst Thou, holy God of Hosts, deign to commune with the children of clay, and impart to them the blessed instruction which raises them from the dust, bearing them aloft, even unto Thee, Thou All-merciful! Holy, holy, holy art Thou, Lord of Hosts! the earth is full of Thy glory! All nature bears its part with us in this chorus of worship; for she forgets not to adorn herself, as for to-day's festival, presenting her buds and gay blossoms as a thank-offering for the great and sacred gift which Thou hast bestowed on man, the master-piece of Thy creation: and all who have known Thy name rejoice, and gladly exclaim with us, Hallelujah to the Most High!

Since that great day, we have known what we are, and to what we are destined; we know that we can look up to Thee, and worship Thee! We know how men

of temperance. This day would teach you to consider well, the right way of giving and distributing the blessings which you have received. This is the very knowledge which we so especially want, and for want of which, the world abounds in poverty in the midst of riches. The poor man would learn better the dignity which belongs to him as man, and would refrain from sighing and craving for the most perishable of all earthly things; and the rich man would know, for he would have time to learn that he is indeed little, if riches be his all, and that his wealth can be valuable, only in proportion as he uses it to a good end, according to the will of God. Then, O then, would rich and great, good fortune and good deeds, be synonymous terms. Behold, then my friends, it would not be known whether you were to be accounted blessed, for your riches or for your virtue. O God grant, that you and I may live to behold the approach of this blessed time!

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can and ought to think and feel, love and act; how they can become holy, and remain holy. O let all the blessedness of that day, all the blessedness of those instructions, be poured out upon us anew; grant that we may lay fast hold on it; grant that we may here on earth, form and prepare ourselves for heaven, and become ever fitter, worthier, to join one day in the blissful song of purified spirits. Holy, holy, holy is our God! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory, to all eternity! Amen.

Beloved hearers! every festival consecrated by religion, suggests to the thinking man, as it comes, some one question, the answer to which contains, in itself, the original meaning and value of the institution. Thus, the festival of the new year brings with it the thrilling enquiry: 'Pilgrim, what is the hour in thy day? Hast thou yet numbered the steps thou hast already measured on the path of life, and marked the seconds which the hand of time has traced on the dial of life?' The day of atonement beckons each of you aside, and asks: 'Thou, who art preparing to reconcile thyself to thy God, art thou at peace with thyself, with thy brethren, with mankind? Art thou one of those hypocrites, who think to flatter the Lord of heaven, in order that he may reckon less strictly with them on earth? The Feast of Tabernacles directs your attention to the rich bounties of your heavenly Parent, asking: 'Hast thou deserved these bounties? Wilt thou, too, show thyself ready to bless, by labouring for the temporal and spiritual welfare of thy fellow men?' The feast commemorating the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, presents the question, 'Art thou really become free? Are thy

conversation and actions such as beseem the liberated children of God? Or art thou still groping in the midst of Egyptian darkness and bondage?' Can you suppose that this day's festival, the festival of the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai, comes without its appropriate enquiry? O, my friends, it has many things to ask of you, many things that nearly concern your welfare, and the welfare of all belonging to you. But, as I have taken on myself to-day the character of its herald, I will include all these in one single question; that one, however, being full of meaning, and of the greatest importance to all of you, to all of you, yes, let me think so! Let me take for granted, that the sacredness of the festival, and no other motive, has assembled you here. Let me believe that ye are men, beings who know of higher things than the earth with her joys and her burdens. Let me not doubt that ye are Israelites in whose hearts that same heaven is still reflected, on which your forefathers gazed at this very hour, thousands of years ago. Deprive me not of the belief, that the memory of the fair morning whose dawn brought with it into the world the most glorious of all the gifts of spring, is presenting itself anew to your souls this day, without having lost a particle of its brightness and beauty.

Thousands of years have elapsed since the Lord appeared on Sinai, and that law was given us, which Moses delivered as an inheritance for the congregation of Jacob. During this long period, what an altered appearance has the world of human society assumed! During this long period, to what very different, nay, even totally opposite views, have the inhabitants of the

earth, from the greatest to the least, attained! What a revolution has been effected by cultivation and science! What remarkable changes have taken place among ourselves, among Israelites! And yet we still continue subject to the same law; your instructors still admonish you to bring up your children according to its precepts, and rejoice in the belief, that thousands and myriads are engaged in giving thanks for it to God.

'How? (I ask as the representative of all, and in the name of each individual)—how? Does my religion, as I have it at the present day, contain, and do I receive from it, all that is requisite for the happiness of man?' Is not this a great, an important question? Is it not now more important, more full of meaning, than ever? Can we shrink from it on this festive occasion? Can there ever be a greater in the estimation of any man, who would not remain on a level with the beasts of the field? It is surely not a matter of indifference whether or not you live in a house, in a calling, in a city, in a country, or in a part of the world where you may possess what is requisite to a life of happiness. Now, does not religion comprehend house, family, calling, city and country? Is not religion the soul of all worlds? Well, then, my friends, prepare yourselves to hear, with collected and serious minds, the answer to the question now suggested; and let a holy spirit of devotion complete the preparation in your souls.

BEHOLD, I HAVE TAUGHT YOU STATUTES, AND JUDGMENTS, EVEN AS THE LORD MY GOD COMMANDED ME, THAT YE SHOULD DO SO IN THE LAND WHITHER

YE GO IN TO POSSESS IT. KEEP, THEREFORE, AND DO THEM; FOR THIS IS YOUR WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING IN THE SIGHT OF THE NATIONS, WHICH SHALL HEAR ALL THESE STATUTES, AND SAY, SURELY THIS GREAT NATION IS A WISE AND UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE. FOR WHAT NATION IS SO GREAT, WHO HATH GOD SO NIGH UNTO THEM, AS THE LORD OUR GOD IS IN ALL THINGS FOR WHICH WE CALL UPON HIM? AND WHAT NATION IS THERE SO GREAT, THAT HATH STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS SO RIGHTEOUS AS ALL THIS LAW, WHICH I SET BEFORE YOU THIS DAY? ONLY TAKE HEED TO THYSELF, AND KEEP THY SOUL DILIGENTLY, LEST THOU FORGET THE THINGS WHICH THINE EYES HAVE SEEN, LEST THEY DEPART FROM THY HEART ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; BUT TEACH THEM TO THY CHILDREN, AND THY CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.

There we have an answer to the question: Does my religion, such as I have it at the present day, offer all that is required to make the life of man happy? Verily the law shall not depart from thy heart; thy children and thy children's children shall abide in it. In this spirit, also, sings the poet Asaph, "HE ESTABLISHED A TESTIMONY IN JACOB, AND APPOINTED A LAW IN ISRAEL, EVEN UNTO THE LATEST GENERATIONS." (Ps. lxxviii. 5—6.)

Thus speaks also the prophet with the eagle's glance: "MY WORDS WHICH I HAVE PUT IN THY MOUTH, SHALL NOT DEPART OUT OF THY MOUTH, NOR OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THY SEED, SAITH THE LORD, FROM HENCEFORTH, AND FOR EVER." (Isaiah lix. 25.)

Our text gives us also the reason for this affirmative answer, while it defines the character of the law. The law breathes a wisdom, a reasonableness, which makes itself everywhere manifest. It establishes an inward relation with God; its ordinances bear the stamp of righteousness. Let us now take all this together into our consideration, taking at the same time a summary view of the law itself, and we shall have an answer to this effect: The religion which I profess gives me at the present day all that is requisite for a happy human life. Yes! to-day, and to-morrow, and to the most distant future, as long as human reason can think, as long as the human heart can love, as long as the welfare of humanity is more than a dream, as long as human virtue is more than a delusion. Let us first make a thorough acquaintance with this answer, and afterwards endeavour to lay to heart the consequences to which the answer leads. Let me request of you to listen with serious minds to a serious exhortation.

I. The feelings may mislead, and the imagination may deceive, but reason neither deceives nor misleads. I am not speaking of the reason which has a like signification with opinion, supposition, belief; of the reason which can be corrupted by inclination or circumstances; or of that which may become, by means of prejudice, actually unreasonable. Observe, I speak of the God-like faculty by which we know how to distinguish between true and false, between right and wrong; that reason which God has bestowed as a distinction upon man; as the only angel standing between the Creator and the creature, through whose means you may approach nearer to Him, and He to you.

As the eye must see, so the reason must think, examine, and investigate. It will attain to some enlightening, tranquillising conclusion, more especially on subjects the knowledge of which, concerns most nearly the man whose intellect is awakened. Man wills to know (as soon as he discovers that his habitation of flesh and blood is no prison, because he is capable of overleaping its narrow bounds)—man wills to know the origin of the great universe above and around him, and the means of its existence: he wills to know what he has to do in this vast All: what signifies the small enigma in the midst of the great one? he wills to know who traces his path; which frequently takes a totally different direction from that which he imagined or intended; in short, he wills to know what are his duties, and capabilities, and final destination. Human reason seeks for a satisfactory conclusion on these points, and as long as it has not found this conclusion, it is in want of the highest good—light. Does my religion afford this light? It does afford it. The sublime words have twice sounded forth, "LET THERE BE LIGHT!" It was on the birth-day of the physical world for the eye, and afterwards on the birth-day of the spiritual world for the reason of man. And if at the present day we were in possession only of the two first of the divine words spoken in Mount Sinai, thinking reason would solemnise in sisterly union with Divine revelation the brightest triumph.

"I AM THE ETERNAL."

Fall prostrate, ye children born of the dust! No! rather raise yourselves from your lowly birth-place.

Rise, and say with a just pride, 'There is a God, a God who has called into being the great universe, and his yet greater work, man; man to whom he has vouchsafed to communicate the knowledge of his divine existence, "I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD!" We should, however, be still without a God if we had no knowledge of Him, but as the Creator of heaven and earth. We must likewise know our relation to God, feel that we are inseparably connected with Him, and rest upon Him, as our origin and support. 'My friend is mine and I am His.' This thought is a real support in our life's path; and this support is offered to us. "I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHO LED YOU OUT OF EGYPT."

The reason of man can find no repose except in the belief of a really existent God; one who lives and works, who guides and directs, the destinies of men and nations. A Divine Providence rules all things: chance, accident, and fate, are mere unmeaning words. "THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME!" One only God lives in all, and the great All is sustained by Him alone. One universal Spirit calls worlds and spirits into existence. Polytheism and idolatry, ye are vanquished together, with all your monstrous and unnatural offspring, for the thinking reason has said Amen to the great proclamation spoken on the heights of Sinai. "MAKE NO IMAGE OF THE ETERNAL GOD; SEEK NO SIMILITUDE FOR HIM WHO HATH NO SIMILITUDE IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH." God is the purest Spirit, and it is only to the Spirit that we can appear; and when we bow the knee before Thee, Lord of lords, let us remember that it is our spirit only that can worship and pray to Spirit.

What low, what revolting errors would not men have been spared by the knowledge of this one truth! From what abominations would it not have freed the history of nations, that we are accustomed to call civilised.

But it is to us, to ourselves, that I would direct your attention to-day. That which we find briefly indicated on Sinai, was afterwards enlarged on in the more ample instructions given by Moses and those prophets who built further on their master's foundation. If reason longs to be satisfied respecting our nature and destination—if it enquires, Wherefore is man made so great? in one point of view a little lower than the angels, and in another so insignificant, like the grass and flower of the field; so high and at the same time so lowly; so rich and yet so poor; so strong and yet so weak, a worm and a divinity? Hear the answer! He is created in the image of God. In this image he must strive to preserve himself undefiled; he must suffer many assaults of temptation, that he may exercise his powers in the combat, and come out of it purified. The great Being who educates man has purposely placed him in his lowly station, in order that he may learn by his own energy to climb the ladder whose foot rests on the earth while its summit is in heaven.

But the great Being enthroned above is no idle spectator of all this. His eye sees; His hand directs us; His wisdom ordains all for us; His power animates, His goodness blesses; His energy acts; His righteous holiness rewards and judges us—judges the creatures whose immortality has already begun here below. These

doctrines are found clearly and plainly taught in our sacred volumes. We have the same guiding-star to direct us still. The most acute understanding has never been able to invent any thing higher or better, more soothing, more sustaining, or more enlightening. Wherever reason has a voice in the most modern systems of philosophy, there we shall find philosophy serving only as a commentary on that sacred text; wherever that text is not adopted, there is idolatry practised, and the name of the Lord misunderstood.

Israelites! does your religion still contain and afford all that is requisite for a happy life on earth? If to be happy on earth is to have a God, a God who is your Father, Protector, Saviour, and Helper; if to be happy is to be conscious of your greatness and dignity as men, as the images of God, as immortal beings; then your religion will suffice for you, so long as human reason will and can think; for in the religion which you acknowledge, it beholds 'its own image reflected.' It is your wisdom, and your understanding; it is, and will ever remain so.

Could you call that a happy or joyous life, through which you were obliged to travel alone, without friends, without companions on the way? And if you were not quite alone—if there were others treading the path of life, some on the right hand, some on the left, between whom and yourselves, however, no interest, no relation existed—the way would indeed be less lonely, but would it deserve to be called pleasant or cheering? How is it then with you, when you become aware that the com-

panions of your journey have the same fatherland with yourselves, that they are bound to the same haven, that they share the same necessity, and speak the same language? that you can understand one another fully, and say one to the other, "WHITHER THOU GOEST I WILL GO; THY PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND THY GOD MY GOD; WHERE THOU DIEST I WILL DIE, AND DEATH ITSELF SHALL NOT SEPARATE US." (Ruth i. 16, 17.) You will feel, for the first time, that it must be well with you in your pilgrimage! Behold, such is the blessed change wrought in you by the religion which you profess, and for the gift of which we are this day raising our hearts in gratitude to heaven. It attunes our minds to sympathy, and shows us the blessed path of love. What light is to the mind, love is to the heart; and as our spirits yearn for light, so do our hearts thirst after affection. A religion that should leave this thirst unslaked, might well be suspected, for it would be ill adapted to man (who possesses a feeling heart as well as a thinking mind), in whom not only a thinking mind, but likewise a feeling heart is constantly demanding nourishment. But blessed are we, my brethren. The very life-breath of our religion is love, and the image of the Creator, which we bear in ourselves, can never manifest itself more worthily or more completely than in acts of love; for it is only by love that we can become like Him who loveth all. Our religion tells us that one God has created us, our text tells us that God is near—is closely related to us. Can there exist any closer relationship? He is our Father, and the Father of all living. One and the same dwelling-place is appointed for us and them here, one and the same is destined for us and them hereafter; the begin-

ning and the end of all are alike! Shall that portion alone which lies between, that span of time which we call life, be unwarmed by the bright beams of love? Mankind are the companions of your journey; love them as you love yourselves. But you pause to reflect. Is it because, perchance, another town, another country, another continent lies between you and your fellow man? Ought a foreign city, or a strange land, or an unknown region then to be deemed an impassable barrier between hearts formed alike? Are not both they and you still the creatures of God? Are ye not still brethren? And though one may dwell where the sun rises, and another where he sets, is not God the God of the whole earth? Is not His name to be praised from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same? Love the stranger also as thou lovest thyself! Do you again hesitate? There lies between you, perhaps, something more than a continent—a different creed. But say, ye who have feeling hearts, suppose that of two born of the same parents, the elder is tall enough to embrace their father, while the younger can only clasp his knees, must not the elder and stronger assist him, who is as yet too little and weak to climb to the parental bosom? Should difference in strength cause difference in fraternal love? The heart answers, No, and so speaks religion also. This love will assume every conceivable form that can serve to bless; it will be meek and ready to assist enemies and offenders, tender and compassionate to the wretched and unfortunate, forbearing and indulgent to the weak and infirm, gentle and kind to those of lowly condition, who have the more need of love from their fellow-men, the more they appear to be without the love of their Father in this, their earthly life.

But does genuine love take care only for the outward weal of our neighbour? Your hearts answer, No! That would be a detestable kind of love, which should assume the arrogant position, that the bodily wants of a brother must be cared for, but that the same brother must dispense with the higher enjoyments of existence. The religion which you acknowledge, teaches love of the most comprehensive nature. When you are enjoying the highest pleasures of the soul, when, in the celebration of the Sabbath, you are raising your thoughts above the world, and feeling that you are better than the beasts of the field, there are others who are to partake with you these supreme enjoyments—the pleasures of the mind and heart—your son and your daughter, and likewise your man-servant and your maid-servant, and the stranger within your gates. The refreshment of the soul is for all, and you are to procure it for those whom God has commended to your charge. It is the aim of love to unite all into one family, by communicating freely what contributes to worldly well-being. The mere meeting together at the table of our Father will never make us one family. Love is far too disinterested to keep to herself anything that is capable of elevating and ennobling man. Her large heart is rich enough, as soon as she bears God within it. Religion disposes the heart to love, and thus satisfies man's most sublime natural want. Israelites, does your religion still offer you all that is requisite for a happy life on earth? If loving and being loved is a part of happiness; if it is a part of human happiness that men should be universally linked in one genuine bond of affection, then does the law, which you acknowledge, give and preserve to you this

heavenly treasure; and as long as your hearts do not cease to love, so long will you find the law of God sufficient for you. "WHAT NATION IS THERE SO GREAT THAT HATH STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS SO RIGHTEOUS?" Our lawgiver does not say, "Where is the nation that has such a splendid temple to shew, or such an imposing form of worship, or such a pious creed to boast of?—but, WHERE IS THAT NATION THAT CAN REJOICE IN SUCH RIGHTEOUS LAWS, AND SUCH WISE STATUTES? In what, then, do these wise and righteous statutes and laws consist? They consist in domestic, civil, and social virtues, on the exercise of which the greatest stress is laid by Moses, and all the prophets. And what is the tendency of these wise and righteous statutes? It is the formation of good citizens, upright men, faithful husbands and wives, careful fathers, conscientious mothers, obedient sons, grateful daughters; in one word, these laws tend to the welfare of man, in all his civil and social relations. To labour for this end is piety: this is the worship which our religion demands. The duties of man lie among men, and to labour incessantly for the welfare of humanity, is the task which religion places before him. The pure law of Moses knows nothing of a slothful piety; as for a withdrawing from society, as though one could not be a saint, a pious man, or an Israelite amid the world and its relations,—that law allows not of it, will not suffer it, declares it to be error. The opinion that the essence of devotion consists in being dead to human society, and leading a life of mere contemplation—this opinion, the birth of later times, is to be found neither in Moses nor in the prophets.

A purely contemplative existence may possibly be that of higher spirits—of angels—but we know nothing in regard to such mysteries and have no need to busy ourselves with inquiries concerning them (Deut. xxix. 28). If men would approach the throne of the Deity, and perform service truly holy and pleasing unto Him, they can do it only by using every energy to remove from life everything that destroys or unhumanises life, and to promote everything that can tend to complete and beautify it. The Ancients have handed down to us a parable, which is very much to our purpose. When Moses arrived in Heaven to receive the law, the angels asked, "Wherefore comes one born of woman amongst us?" "To receive the law," replied the Almighty. "Why is not such a treasure given to us?" "That which religion contains, is adapted only for man, our beloved," said the kind Father of men; "it will ennoble his nature, and make his existence blessed."

Religion is sent on earth for the happiness of human beings: "FOR THIS COMMANDMENT THAT I GIVE THEE THIS DAY, IT IS NOT HIDDEN FROM THEE, NEITHER IS IT FAR OFF. IT IS NOT IN HEAVEN THAT THOU SHOULDST SAY, WHO SHALL GO UP FOR US TO HEAVEN, AND BRING IT TO US, THAT WE MAY HEAR IT AND DO IT? NEITHER IS IT BEYOND THE SEA THAT THOU SHOULDST SAY, WHO SHALL GO OVER THE SEA FOR US, AND BRING IT UNTO US, THAT WE MAY HEAR IT AND DO IT? BUT THE WORD IS VERY NIGH UNTO THEE, IN THY MOUTH, AND IN THY HEART, THAT THOU MAYEST DO IT" (Deut. xxx. 11—14). Israelites! why

should such a law be no longer suitable to man? Is human nature different from what it was? Has man ceased to desire happiness? Is human society willing to dispense with felicity? O no! It is suited to all men, of all conditions, in all places, at all times, of every race. Suitable!—well adapted! Some may ask with surprise, "Does it not shackle us by its multiplied ceremonies, and prevent our active participation in the duties of social life?" O how can you suffer yourselves to be persuaded into such a notion? Whoever is imbued with the spirit of the Law, knows that no law which is inconsistent with the universal prosperity of human and civil society, forms, or ever did form, a part of religion. No man shall, by false reasonings, deprive us of this precept, "YE SHALL THEREFORE KEEP MY STATUTES AND MY JUDGMENTS, WHICH IF A MAN DO HE SHALL LIVE IN THEM," (live, not perish, not die, either physically or morally).

My brave fellow-countrymen! There is no law in the religion of Moses to hinder you from devoting your powers to the state to which you belong, to the Fatherland which protects you, at whatever hour, or on whatever day your services may be indispensably necessary. Parents! there is no law in the religion of Moses to prevent your labouring unweariedly for the welfare of your children. Women!—aged and young—there is no law in the religion of Moses, to prevent your cultivating the noble capabilities of your sex, promoting the happiness of, and thus embellishing, your homes. The professor of the religion of Moses is admonished to encourage all that can contribute to social harmony, and to

prevent whatever tends to its destruction; therefore let the tenderest, firmest, bond, unite the hearts of children and parents. "HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER THY WHOLE LIFE LONG!" Therefore let the life of thy neighbour be precious, "THOU SHALT NOT KILL." The wife of another shall be sacred in thine eyes—"THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY." Defraud not the husband of the love and faith of the companion of his life; lay no snares for the virtue of his wife, lest thou bring misery into a peaceful family. Respect the property of thy neighbour—"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL." Not even in words, not even with the breath of his mouth, must the Israelite injure his fellow-men—"THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR." There shall be no lying, nor slandering, nor dissembling, no flattering with smooth words contrary to the meaning of the heart; and so shall every action, every thought, have this aim, to render lastingly happy the circle in which you live. Israelites! does your religion still afford all that is required for man's happiness on earth? Even so, as long as human happiness is not a dream.

It is very possible to observe most punctually all the laws of Scripture, and yet to be as far removed from virtue, as the east is from the west. Is this an enigma to you? It is true, nevertheless. A religion that looks to deeds only, without caring for the manner and motives of our actions, is very defective, it is properly no religion, it is policy, prudence. The Government commands you to do this and that; but what you may be thinking or feeling during your performance of the

required actions, or from what motives the deeds and actions may spring, is totally indifferent to it. It is not so with religion. The religion that is worthy of the name, demands something more than good deeds; it requires pure motives and holy feelings, for it is the aim of religion to purify our inward life. "WHERE IS THE NATION THAT HATH SUCH WISE STATUTES AS THESE LAWS WHICH I SET BEFORE YOU THIS DAY?" says our text. Now these laws demand righteous actions, grounded on righteous and true principles; it is their object to transform men into really holy beings, not such as shew their holiness outwardly in their deportment, in their clothing, in their speech, or in their dwellings; far from it. The truly devout man has no outward mark to distinguish him as such. This is no part of religion; it is your inner man that she requires you to keep eminently pure; it is your hearts that she bids you dedicate as a temple to the Lord. The heart shall be tenanted by nothing but what is best and purest, nothing but what He who looketh at the heart, can view with approbation; that and that alone can form a virtuous man. Therefore the religion that you profess repeats on occasion of these actions that do not betray the motive of him who performs them, these important words:—FEAR THY GOD, the God from whom nothing can be hid; and the last and greatest command of the Decalogue forbids even the wish, the desire of any prohibited thing. You are already guilty of adultery if you have desired your neighbour's wife; you have committed theft as soon as you have coveted your neighbour's property. For if the sin is complete in the mind, it is as much as committed. If you take delight in

sporting with evil desires and impure thoughts, you will grow every hour worse and worse; you will indulge yourselves in the secret contemplation of the images of an unhallowed fancy, and what is admitted into the secret chambers of your souls, will and must, sooner or later, shew itself in all its hideousness to the world.

And who is the Ideal of inward holiness? He who is all pure, all holy—God. The Israelite is admonished to be holy, because God is holy (Leviticus xix. 2). Therefore every emotion of hatred, envy, or malignity, is blasphemy against the All-Holy; every unbridled and unchaste thought is blasphemy against the All-Pure; and every reprehensible desire is an insult to Him, to whom both heart and spirit must be devoted: you need but to peruse the laws that Moses delivered, to be convinced that they insist on the purest morality; and hence this moral law, the moral law of reason, will subsist to the latest age, however far mankind may have advanced in science and civilisation.

Israelites! so long as virtue among men is something more than a vain illusion, so long will your religion be capable of ensuring to man a happy existence.

II. You stand before the Lord your God this day, with your aged and young, your wives and children. That you differ widely in your views and opinions respecting God and religion, I well know. Permit me, then, to address you with reference to the different views that prevail among you. I would turn first to those (O

that the number were small !) who are disaffected towards the religion in which they were born, and are, either openly or privately, disinclined to continue in it. Say! are you acquainted with that religion? Are you aware that it affords satisfactory and consoling knowledge, respecting the greatest truths of life—that it opens the well-spring of love to all who have hearts, that it proclaims an active life, a life devoted to the happiness of mankind, a God-like life, to be the worship most acceptable to God? Are you aware that its aim is to ennoble the inward man? What would you have more? Wherefore raise your voices against the loving mother that has nourished you? Say, have you not had time to learn the worth of your treasure? Have you been too much busied with the affairs of the world, its pleasures and its follies? But I pray you, is it fair to prejudge the thing you know not? Oh! that ye would this day resolve to search deeper, to make yourselves better acquainted with the law that rejoices the heart and enlightens the eyes, and gives wisdom to the simple. But perhaps you belong to that class of men of whom the ancients say, "They know Thee, Lord; but will not know Thee." Those to whom it is indifferent whether they belong to one faith or another—those who make traffick with what is holiest on earth. I will not now reproach you, by telling you that it is such as you who bring an evil name upon Israel; but I would beseech and exhort you to have only humanity enough, to keep yourselves apart from those of our community who do not pretend to such wisdom as yours. Keep out of the way with your scruples or your enticing words; we have already enough amongst us of such as are

following your example, without any great struggle despising their parents, and saying to them, "Where you live, there will I not live; your people is not our people; our God is not your God: we will not die where you die, nor rest in the same grave with you." Already we suffer enough from such distractions; increase not the number of our wounds. There is another class, whose members are diametrically opposed to those just mentioned, who yet do not operate beneficially on our community. It is composed of men who are, indeed, acquainted with religion, but who mistake it in one of its most essential parts. You have heard that it is the aim of the Mosaic religion to make us good and useful members of society; so that we may, with all the powers we possess, labour for the welfare of the country to which we belong. These men however, ignorant of the world and human life, act and speak as though Israel still formed a distinct and separate state; consequently, they observe as parts of the universal religion of Israel, institutions which possessed value in Palestine only, because there only they had spirit and life. They require and inculcate the strict observance of these, although by such observances, much of our power to act usefully as citizens must necessarily be destroyed. Besides this, they envelop the jewel of religion in so many folds, that numbers of our brethren cannot, or will not, penetrate the covering, see not the jewel itself. It is true that gold, when pure and soft, must be mixed with copper before it can be wrought; but, my friends, be moderate in the use of the ignoble alloy. Do you not consider that the gilded copper, or the coppered gold, must, by degrees, lose all its lustre? Do you not reflect

that the impression that gives value to your coin will be corroded and eaten away by the *aqua regia* of the world? Or are you quite ignorant of the aspect of things around you? Ignorance would, perhaps, be pardonable; but with many of you there is more than ignorance—there is obstinacy. Many (I grieve to say it) belong to the hypocrites, who have more regard for their own wilfulness and advantage than for our religious weal. They care not whether some treasures may yet be saved from the wreck, or all be lost in the bottomless abyss. Were you real servants of God, true shepherds in Israel, like those who have gone before you, your case would be to save what is essential, you would be the first to improve our temples and the form of worship—you would be the first to prepare for our youth, books of religion, in which the husk should be distinguished from the kernel, out of which they should learn that the religion of the Israelite never is, and how it never is, in any way inconsistent with the fulfilment of any of our duties as subjects or as citizens. But, alas! ye are like the woman who feigned a mother's affection before the judgment-seat of Solomon; for ye say, respecting the child that was not destroyed in the night-time, NEITHER OF US SHALL HAVE IT. Yet you know what the real mother did: she yielded her claim willingly to save from destruction the child that had lain on her bosom (1 Kings iii. 16—28). If religion really lies near your hearts, teach it and preach it in its real purity and simplicity, and divest it of all that can make us ridiculous to the eyes of other nations—divest it of all excrescences and additions, so that it may be again what it was originally; and all truly rational and wise men may be forced to exclaim, in the words of

our text, "SURELY THIS GREAT NATION IS A WISE AND UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE."

In conclusion, let me address a few words to the most conscientious among you. What shall I say to *you*, my friends—you to whom the high concern of religion is one of heartfelt importance, who know the heavenly treasure, and value it according to its worth, who bear in your hearts the God of your fathers, and will give Him an abode there, until those hearts shall cease to beat. To you, my friends, who this day are met to celebrate the Feast of the Covenant for the seventh time in this sanctuary, what shall I say? Rejoice, rejoice in this solemn day; rejoice in the treasure which was bestowed on you as at this day! Rejoice that ye are capable of appreciating such a blessing, and let your hearts glow warmer at every remembrance of it, and your spirits become more steadfast in the service of your God! Think over what has happened to you during the past year, and say, when the bright side of life was turned towards you, was not the brightness still brighter, were not the gifts of fortune more refreshing; did not that religion direct your view upwards, so that you perceived the presence of the Heavenly Parent who looked on you with so much love? When the disappointments of life entered your threshold, did you not find them easier to bear, did you not bear them more nobly, for that religion pointed out to you Him, who heals our wounds and helps us to bear our sorrows? Did not the sick suffer with greater patience, because religion, like a kind nurse, kept watch beside their couch? Was not the hand of poverty less heavy, where affectionate parents could commit their children,

clamorous with hunger, to the care of that Father whose hand is ever open? Parents have stood beside the grave of their beloved ones, and was it not Religion that spoke peace to their hearts and wiped away their tears? Or tell me, of all those who have gone to their eternal home, was there one who on his death-bed repented that he had remained constant to his religion, and died an Israelite? O let me entreat that you will this day renew your resolution to remain, together with the children God has given you, faithful to that law which enlightens the mind and purifies the heart, which strengthens your energies and ennobles your inward man. Resolve anew, to bring up your sons and daughters to virtue and religion, that God may dwell in their hearts and in their lives. Resolve anew, this day, my friends, to cherish the seeds of a better and more religious life; and come all who can, young and old, rich and poor, come and water the tree of life. We are, it is true, but a small flock, but that must not dishearten you: the number of the best among men has always been small, and one excellent man, one excellent woman, outweighs a hundred common minds; in an irreligious age especially, one pious soul is of great worth. Again, you must not be discouraged because there is amongst us, in our homes and in our families, much that is waste and decayed, dead, or like to the dead. He, who can restore what is decayed, and re-animate what is dead, He still lives and rules. Listen!

"THE HAND OF THE LORD WAS UPON ME, AND CARRIED ME OUT IN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD, AND SET ME DOWN IN THE MIDST OF THE VALLEY WHICH

WAS FULL OF BONES, AND CAUSED ME TO PASS BY THEM ROUND ABOUT: AND BEHOLD, THERE WERE VERY MANY IN THE OPEN VALLEY; AND, LO, THEY WERE VERY DRY. AND HE SAID UNTO ME, SON OF MAN, CAN THESE BONES LIVE? AND I ANSWERED, O LORD GOD, THOU KNOWEST. AGAIN HE SAID UNTO ME, PROPHESY UPON THESE BONES, AND SAY UNTO THEM, O YE DRY BONES, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD UNTO THESE BONES; BEHOLD, I WILL CAUSE BREATH TO ENTER INTO YOU, AND YE SHALL LIVE: AND I WILL LAY SINEWS UPON YOU, AND WILL BRING UP FLESH UPON YOU, AND COVER YOU WITH SKIN, AND PUT BREATH IN YOU, AND YE SHALL LIVE; AND YE SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD. SO I PROPHESIED AS I WAS COMMANDED: AND AS I PROPHESIED, THERE WAS A NOISE, AND BEHOLD A SHAKING, AND THE BONES CAME TOGETHER, BONE TO HIS BONE. AND WHEN I BEHELD, LO, THE SINEWS AND THE FLESH CAME UP UPON THEM, AND THE SKIN COVERED THEM ABOVE: BUT THERE WAS NO BREATH IN THEM. THEN SAID HE UNTO ME, PROPHESY UNTO THE WIND, PROPHESY, SON OF MAN, AND SAY TO THE WIND, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD; COME FROM THE FOUR WINDS, O BREATH, AND BREATHE UPON THESE SLAIN, THAT THEY MAY LIVE. SO I PROPHESIED AS HE COMMANDED ME, AND THE BREATH CAME UNTO THEM, AND THEY LIVED, AND STOOD UPON THEIR FEET, AN EXCEEDINGLY GREAT ARMY (Ezekiel chap. xxxvii.) These bones betoken the little flock of Israel. Say not, Our bones are withered, and our hope is lost. Rise from the dust, breathe in the Spirit of God, and you will become an

exceeding great army. In the kingdom of spirits it was ever thus; because in that kingdom, men are not reckoned by actual number but by the amount of their will, their power, their zeal and their labours.

The smallest of all nations stood in Mount Sinai, but God gave his blessing to the feeble instrument by whose teachings the world was to be enlightened. We possess these teachings, and need only to scatter abroad the seed. Brethren, centuries pass away! God only knows how long we may have to labour in this sacred cause; He only knows how long we may be permitted to tarry here: He only knows whether we shall leave to our children much or little of this world's goods. Have you no desire for immortality even on earth? In our pious children we shall leave to the world the most glorious memorials of ourselves; in the establishment and extension of our temples the most undying monuments. Let us be unwearied while raising such monuments for ourselves; let us never tire of labouring to erect such a structure, as may reach even unto heaven, and gain us an entrance there.

Amen.

SERMON IX.

THE ISRAELITE'S CONFESSION OF FAITH.

DEUTERONOMY vi. 4—9.

IF the exhortation that lately sounded from this place, calling on you to remain true to the covenant of your fathers, has not yet died away in your souls; if it has seized on the world within you, and found a willing reception there; then I need but to touch lightly the chords of the holy instrument, in order to find you, even now that the festival is over, still disposed as for a festival, as beseems men, who, in following consistently the Divine commands, give the fairest testimony, that reason and wisdom have become to them the clear guiding stars of a pious and virtuous life. By the Divine help, I showed you, at our last solemn meeting, what such a life is, while I laid open to you the Spirit of the Mosaic religion, and displayed to you the treasures which this religion freely offers to all, who know and love it. But to religion belongs also the acknowledgment of religion. If a child really loves its parents, it will surely never hesitate to declare, readily and frequently, 'These are my best and dearest friends, to whom I owe life and

prosperity.' The affectionate wife acknowledges heartily that the days of her existence are devoted to her chosen companion, and the friend takes openly his friend's part. If such acknowledgment is refused or withheld, the child cannot be said to love the parents, nor the wife the husband, nor the friend the friend. It is no otherwise with regard to our relation with our Friend, Protector, and Parent above. If you belong to Him you will confess, at all times, that you are His; you will often and willingly say, that you have found Him, and tell what He is to you, and that you mean to remain faithful to Him. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. Religion is an inward life; now the inward life will and must express itself outwardly. The light to which it is compared in the Scriptures, is one that you cannot hide; it must shine, till it is extinguished. Hence, whoever has any religion, confesses it: whoever does not profess a religion, has none, though he may, possibly, maintain the contrary: what he thinks he has, is not religion, it is scarcely its shadow. Our weekly portion of Scriptnre for to-day, presents itself very opportunely; the Mosaic Religion was the subject of my discourse on the occasion of the festival, and now, immediately after the feast, the daily reading leads us to the consideration of the

CONFESSION OF THE MOSAIC RELIGION,

with which, in its fullest meaning, may your hearts be filled, not this hour only, but as long as you live. Amen.

HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD. AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY

GOD WITH ALL THINE HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT. AND THESE WORDS WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY SHALL BE IN THINE HEART; AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT TALK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP. AND THOU SHALT BIND THEM FOR A SIGN UPON THINE HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN THINE EYES. AND THOU SHALT WRITE THEM UPON THE POSTS OF THINE HOUSE, AND ON THY GATES.

Here we have the creed of the Israelite. Our ancient instructors must have seen much in these words, since they have incorporated them, and interwoven them with our morning and evening devotions. These words are to usher in the day, with the first beam of morning light: and as the evening shades close around us, the same solemn tones, like the soft cradle song of a tender mother, are to invite us to repose. All that lies between —the day, with its busy turmoil, its checquered hours of gladness and of grief, is to be animated by the breath of these words, and thereby to become a portion of a life truly pleasing to God. Therefore raise your voices and sing, "O happy we, how goodly is our portion, how pleasant our lot; and how beautiful our inheritance! O happy we, who rise early in the morning, and attend late in the evening, twice every day to proclaim, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One."*

* Morning Prayer. שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד

The words which I have read as a confession of faith, present four points to our consideration:

I. The True Foundation of our Belief.

II. The Efficient Power of our Belief.

III. The Means of Promoting our Belief.

IV. The Ways and Means of manifesting our Belief.

The fourth point of consideration with the two last verses of our text, may employ our attention when next we meet for the purpose of devotion. To-day we will endeavour, with the Divine help, to illustrate the three first points.

I. "HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD." This truth, which the understanding of man is unable to fathom, or his tongue to express, is the immediate foundation of our religion. Whether we raise our enquiring eyes to the heights of heaven, or cast them thoughtfully into the depths, the same voice proclaims constantly, "THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE ONLY." These words are the creed of all created nature. As often as the sun appears in the east, robed in majesty and beauty, his morning worship is this, 'It is one God alone, who hath appointed my path and my circuit;' and this chord continues to resound till the moon appears in the western sky to assume her dominion over half the world, proclaiming 'The same God who gave to the sun his laws and his brightness, gave me my light also.' And then the hosts of stars bow before Him in solemn worship, from evening until the return of the morning light. And if we gaze on the immeasurable ocean, the same is murmured in each billowy wave, 'The one God who gave form and existence to the dew-drop, has made

me in my immensity: He it is who raiseth the stormy tempest, and then layeth His commands on me, saying, 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' 'His name is the Everlasting.' And the mountain that towers above the clouds, bears this inscription engraven on its brow, 'It is one God who laid my foundations on the earth, and formed the atom that floats in the sunbeam.' In the cedar as in the hyssop is His name made known; it grows in the tree, and blossoms in the flower. Yes! it is one Being who stretched out the heavens, and established the earth, and created the forms of nature into one harmonious whole. She received her existence from one, and therefore it is that her manifold and ever-changing phenomena tend only to the completion of one great system, full of order and harmony, "THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE, AND THE ONLY ONE."

Thus speaks, likewise, the creed of reason; for as soon as man is able and willing to examine by her light, he rejects the belief in Polytheism, which leads him astray from labyrinth to labyrinth, and from one contradiction to another. The one only God frees him from these mazes of contradiction and loosens the bonds of error. Hence, the reason of some sages among the ancients, led them to declare with us, that the Lord our God is one; and hence, when a better knowledge fills the earth, the reason of all men will lead them to proclaim that 'THE LORD IS ONE, AND HIS NAME ONE.'*

What reason has discovered, is confirmed by the voice

* Zephaniah iii. 9; Zechariah xiv. 9.

within, the sacred decision of the heart. In the minds of pious and wise men, the feeling arises spontaneously of homage to one only Being, who has called worlds and spirits into existence. The heart indeed knows no other creed, and thus 'in every language that man can understand,'* in the pure speech of nature, in the well-ordered language of reason, 'in the still small voice of conscience,' we hear repeated "HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE."

And this creed is the firm foundation of faith! Only one God—whether we look backwards or forwards—the one only God is He who ruleth from everlasting to everlasting (Ps. xc. 2; Isaiah xliv. 6).

One God! Therefore all that my eyes behold has been called into existence by His word; worlds and suns are scattered by him: His name is Almighty (Psalm xxxiii. 7—10). One God, and every where life, and power, and activity! Where shall I seek Him to find Him out? Rather, where shall I seek and *not* find Him? His name is Omnipresent and Omniscient (Psalm cxxxix). One God! He it is then who gives bread to all creatures; He it is, on whom the eyes of all wait; whose gracious bounty feeds and clothes me and you, my children and yours, and who forgets nothing that He has made: His name is All-merciful, All-loving! (Exodus xxxiv. 6; Psalm cxlv). One God! Then it is He who looks down from His habitation in heaven, upon the children of men; who guides, and tries, and rewards, and punishes; it is He

* בכל לשון שאתה שומע

who regards the righteous with approbation, and will not suffer iniquity; it is He who distributes to every man according to His works, and who has connected inseparably with virtue the bliss of heaven, and with sin the terrors of hell. His name is just and holy. (Deut. xxxii; Psalm iv. 11—7).

Oh, Israelites, what a creed is this! Have you weighed well what your lips utter day after day? Have you well considered what fulness of thought is contained in that single word, *One* (אחד)?

I believe in one only God. Then I belong to Him only, my worship is due only to Him; let not my prayers be addressed to any angels, for the angels are the servants attending His word, doing His will equally with myself,* and with all the powers of nature; be it far from me to have recourse to any saint that he should plead for me, or become my intercessor. God alone heareth my voice from out of His temple, and my cry comes before Him alone (Ps. xviii. ver. 7).

I believe in one only God. I will therefore not yield

* Ps. civ. 4. In this sense the ancients said אין מלאך אחד עושה שתי שליחות According to our religious ideas, it borders on idolatry to address angels in our prayers, or to regard them as mediators; it is likewise prohibited to personify any of the divine attributes, and, in this manner, pay them divine worship. This is called in ספרי at the part, Deut. 4—7, אליו-אליו ולא למדותיו The following sentence is often repeated: גמורא דאם בפרונקא ולא נקבליה

idolatrous worship to the works of His hands, I will not put any creature on a level with the Creator, I will not pay divine honours to the rich, or the mighty, or the great ones of the earth, I will not put my trust in any of the "sons of men, in whom there is no help" (Ps. cxlvi. 3—5). Neither allurements nor threats shall turn me aside from my God, and the reverence due to Him. And even the best and purest of men shall not serve exclusively as examples for my moral conduct and actions, because there is no human virtue that is free from defects and blemishes. My pattern is the one God, He who is righteous and holy (Lev. xix. 2. Deut. xi. 22).

I believe in one only God. I will therefore have no other Gods beside him, whatever names they may bear. I will not deify myself, nor vainly imagine that my riches can supply the want of God's blessing, or my strength be a substitute for His protection, my acuteness for His guidance, or my prudence for His wisdom and teachings; I will not bow the knee before this world's idols, worshipping the time and its fashions; neither will I say unto gold, "Thou art my confidence," nor find my heaven in the tumultuous life that is dedicated to the pleasures of sense.

I believe in one only God. Therefore, whatever may happen to me in this my journey of a day, can come but from one Being; that one Being is kind and full of compassion; whatever He gives, whatever He resumes, I will receive all His dispensations with a thankful heart and a resigned will. And if all others should forsake and

reject me, One there is who will ever befriend me, a Father who is ever near, on whose love I can ever repose.

Yes! I believe in one only God, the one who has called me into existence, the one who will call me hence. Under the protection of this one God, I live and move while on earth; under His protection I shall remain beyond the grave. Wherever I may exist, and whatever may be my mode of existence, this one God will still be my God for ever.

"HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, IS THIS ONE, ONLY GOD." With this truth, every child of Israel concludes his life on earth. With this confession of faith upon my lips, I shall one day present myself before the Lord, saying, 'Thus, O my God, have I, together with my brethren and sisters, prayed to Thee, believed in Thee, acknowledged Thee. Receive me, O Thou Eternal! Thou only God, for ever and ever.'

II. AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD, WITH ALL THY HEART AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT.* To love God is the greatest, and at the same time, the most blessed requisition that can be made of man. What does not love suppose, love in the true acceptation of the word, the love which is engendered by the most unbounded reverence for, as well as the most unlimited confidence in, the beloved object. It was slowly, and during the lapse of long

* ואהבת את יהוה אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך

periods of time, my brethren, that our forefathers learned the knowledge of God, they witnessed with their own eyes what His power was able to perform, and what He had done for them; how He had borne them as the nurse does the nursling, and with them, as the instructor with the wayward child; and then, when reverence and trust had begun to take root in their hearts, and to prepare them for love, when they became capable of understanding the holy call to love God, then, and not before, was it addressed to them. Hitherto they had been admonished to fear God, now they are told to love Him.* And how is it with us? Have not we, too, learned to acknowledge the greatness and majesty of God? Does not the one only God appear to us face to face? Is He not everywhere working around us, in power and love, mercy and holiness? Ah! wherever this belief has taken firm hold on the mind, surely it must of necessity produce love. Oh, what a blessed vocation to love the greatest and best of Beings! not to shrink back from his greatness, not to tremble before His Almighty power, but to incline towards Him as children towards a father, to cling to Him, and to make love fill the chasm that lies between the immensity of God and our littleness; between the might of God and our feebleness; between the perfection of God and our sinfulness. Blessed call, to love God! for what is such a call, but an invitation to return love already bestowed? He who first loved us, who loved us before our tongues could lisp out His name, before we knew how to direct

* The admonition to love God is not to be found in the four first books of Moses.

our eyes in gratitude towards Him, it is He whom we are to love; and it is love for love. Blessed is the people to whom such a command is given! Yet surely, the belief in one only Being, the original source of all that is good, and beautiful, and sublime, all that is great, all that is perfect, must produce love in us, even without a command. We need only to reflect for a few moments daily on what His parental truth and greatness have done for each of us, individually; we need only to pass in review before our minds, what He has done for us since we have been capable of thought and feeling; and even those of us who dare to call themselves poor and miserable, will confess themselves unable to survey the extent or to reckon the amount of his goodness. Hence, I believe, that as soon as you have uttered, with solemn reflection, these words, "HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE," the rest must immediately follow, "AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD, WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT."

But what should be the nature of this love? This it is necessary to determine, lest fanaticism and superstition make their voices heard, and prescribe such services and such offerings as are unworthy the name of love to God. The heathens thought they loved their divinities, while they sacrificed to them their own children. Many, even among those who acknowledge but one God, have represented the destruction and annihilation of self, as the proper proofs of love to Him. There are many at the present day, who consider a disinclination to active life, to be the same thing as

devotion towards God. Far be it from you, my friends, to entertain ideas so erroneous. You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your powers. You must embrace this one great Being as the Father of all worlds, and of every race of existences; to this one great Being, you must give yourselves up, wholly and entirely. What kind of love is that, which does not produce entire devotedness to the beloved object? If love be indeed true and genuine, it lays claim to the whole man, it requires the heart, the mind, the energies, complete and undivided! "My son, give me thine heart!" My daughter, give me thine, is the call of God to us. Do you shrink from the demand? O learn but to understand your Father aright, and you will find that He is demanding nothing of you, but your own highest good. For if the heart love God above everything, then the desires will be His, the affections His, the will His, and the energies His. This is no romantic enthusiasm: the wishes and affections can then only be fixed on what is good and excellent. In such hearts sin can find no place, for the heart cannot love God and sin, at the same time.

Young men, as often as you repeat in your daily devotions, the words, "I LOVE GOD WITH ALL MY HEART," add to them this resolution, 'Should the evil desires in my heart be ever so powerful, inviting me to do what is sinful and displeasing to Him who formed the heart and its fires, I will smother their fury and strive to bring it under; I will flee from those destructive pleasures that surround me, in fatally alluring forms; I

will shun the arts of such as would fain lead both body and soul to perdition. No, "I WILL NOT DO THIS GREAT WICKEDNESS AND SIN AGAINST MY GOD."

Young women, as often as you promise, in repeating the profession of your faith, to love God, with all your hearts, take upon yourselves this vow also, 'Though the voice of vanity and of this world's pleasures should sound ever so sweetly on my ears, it shall not penetrate to my heart. My heart belongs to my God, who created the heart of woman to be a temple sacred to virtue and purity.' Men and women, as often as you confess it your duty to love God, with all your heart, promise likewise thus, 'When temptations encompass and assail us, when dishonesty allures us on the right hand, and impurity beckons us on the left, and opportunity is not wanting to gratify the unruly desires within us, then will we offer to our God our power and our will, we will desire only one thing, that which He wills and requires, whatever it may be. We love God with all our heart; what sort of love is that which cannot do everything for the sake of its object?'

Your minds, too, must be devoted to the Almighty. You shall love God with all your soul. All your thoughts and intentions, all your imaginings and your strivings, belong only to the One God. Your judgment is for Him! your wisdom for Him! your knowledge of art for Him! your science for Him! Let the love of God be the soul of your souls! If you love Him you will bend all the energies of your mind to benevolent and salutary objects; you will spend them on what is

good and holy; you will not prostitute the treasures of your intellect to the purpose of ornamenting, favoring, or cloaking iniquity of any kind: use not the divine fire to spread desolation on earth.

In like manner you must love God with all your might, or substance. The inward riches of man are expressed by the words *heart* and *soul;* לב and נפש; his outward possessions by the word מאד, *lands, treasures, name* and *condition,* According to this interpretation, what is the meaning of the profession, 'I love God with all my substance; I must love God in His human children, therefore I will use the blessings of my station for the welfare and profit of my brethren: I will open my house to the poor, I will clothe the naked, feed the hungry, refresh the weary; I will give and spend freely to maintain the needy; I will alleviate cares and dry tears, heal wounds and raise dejected hearts; I will be a protector and a father to the widow and the orphan. I love God with all my substance, therefore I will never offer up my human greatness, my human dignity, or my human nobility as a sacrifice to gold: whatever is not to be obtained by just and lawful means, I will not seek. And as my heart shall not harbour any sinful desire, nor my soul any impure thought, so neither shall my house be the receptacle of any ill-gotten wealth. My rank in life shall be used to promote what is noble, to effect what is excellent in the world of men, and my name, whether in life or death, shall not be pronounced without a blessing.' Who can express the extent that can be embraced, or the amount of good that can be effected by such a motive, as love to God! This love ought

to receive fresh energy, fresh nourishment, fresh life each day, by the repetition of our confession of faith, until it become the sole and engrossing affection of our being, an affection to which no sacrifice can be difficult, which God, our Friend and beloved Father, requires from us. The history of the world, my friends, presents examples of many noble souls, who, from the love of God, that is, love of virtue, love of religion, love of duty, love of mankind, have been capable of the most difficult sacrifices; when the life that they could have preserved, could not have been spent consistently with the will of Him who gave it, they brought it, voluntarily, and laid it down as an offering before Him. The disciples of Rabbi Akiba beheld their master, as he was going forward cheerfully to martyrdom, and when they asked him, 'Rabbi, is it right to take leave of life so joyfully?' he answered them in the following manner: 'Each day, as I have repeated my confession of faith, it has been my custom to ask myself, how I should find an opportunity of proving the greatness of my love, by my deeds. Behold, the opportunity is come, shall I not seize it with rejoicing? If I cannot live for my God, life no longer deserves the name.' Thus saying, he bore courageously the pangs of martyrdom, while the last pulsation of his heart, and the last thought of his spirit were employed in breathing out the words אֶחָד "The God whom I serve is ONE only God."*

III. "AND THESE WORDS WHICH I COMMAND THEE

* Talmud. Berachoth, p. 9, deserves to be read.

THIS DAY SHALL BE IN THINE HEART; AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT TALK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP."*

Here we see the means by which our belief is to be propagated. My brethren, if it is only on sabbaths and festivals, and, perhaps, once or twice a year, that you appear in the presence of God, and exclaim, 'Behold here are we, here have we taken refuge,' and do nought beside for the upholding of our religion, then I say unto you, that you will save neither yourselves nor your faith. The truths of religion, our text tells us, must dwell in your hearts, and abide constantly in your minds. The doctrines relating to God, His existence, and His love, must be ever present to your souls. And this it is which the Psalmist means, when he says, "I HAVE SET THE LORD ALWAYS BEFORE ME; BECAUSE HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, I SHALL NOT BE MOVED" (Psalm xvi. 8). By such means you must necessarily become better acquainted with these divine doctrines, and so daily advance in the knowledge of them. Do you think this a strange demand on you, ye who are in the prime of manhood, ye who are advanced in years? Does it appear strange that you should be required, at your age, to learn, to learn daily? To me it seems much more strange, that man should devote more pains and attention to the most trivial science, than to the great science of life. O, why

* והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך ושננתם
לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך
בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך:

do they bestow so much seriousness on trifles, while they trifle with what is truly serious?

"YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN." The word in the original, is used in reference to a sharp-pointed arrow, which pierces the heart easily, but is very difficult to be extracted. Teaching alone is not sufficient, not nearly sufficient; were it so, the kingdom of Heaven would long since have been established upon earth. Teaching and preaching are useless in themselves. Though you had prophets, like Isaiah, for your preachers, men who could speak with the tongues of angels, and though each discourse were a master-piece, they could not form you into perfect men. It is true they might do much good, and keep up in you, for some time, a holy frame of mind; but this could not be lasting. And if not sufficient for you, would it succeed better with the more frivolous youth around you? You must then impress well on your children the truths of religion; you must talk of them while you are in your house; your house is the temple in which you, ye fathers and mothers, as consecrated priests and priestesses, have to maintain the worship of your God. At home, for there the perversions of the world reach you not, there you have no need to do homage to the absurdities of the age, or to deck yourself in its vices and immoralities and false enlightenment, for fear of appearing, in the eyes of men, to be 'behind the fashion,' or, 'the improvements of the time.' Who is there to control you in your own house? It is here that you can shew to your children true examples of pious men, and believing Israelites. And this is the pointed dart that enters the

heart readily, but will not so readily be taken out. You must be true examples, when you journey abroad, when you lie down, when you rise up; that is, you must let no opportunity escape you, of giving such impressive instruction to your children, as will fix them more and more firmly in faith, and in love to God. Indeed, home is the place most especially adapted to such instruction. Home displays a picture of human life in miniature; for here it is that the changes of life, its meetings, and partings, its joys and sorrows, its superfluities and wants, are continually manifested. Who has not experienced these events in his own family? Now rational and conscientious parents will teach their children from such occurrences, as from pictures of life. By this means, the instruction goes deeper into the tender soul of the child, and fixes itself more firmly there. When joy enters your dwelling, or when grief makes its inroads into your life; then direct your sons and daughters to the one only God; then point out to them the source of all good; tell them of Him who lays on the burthen, and helps us to bear it. Turn to profit every scene of life, so as to win your children more and more to God and His teachings, to warm their hearts in His service, to enlarge their views, to rectify their ideas, to purify their feelings, and to ennoble their course. It is only in this manner that you can bring up and form your children to become pillars of our belief; it is only by these means that they will be true to God with their whole hearts and minds, and so remain, when you are no longer here to guide them, when you depart on the long journey that leads to your home, when "YOU LIE DOWN." My friends, when age makes you inactive, or

when sickness chains you to your couch, when you lie down never more to wake on earth, and your children must remain here alone— Alone did I say? O no; for though dead, you will hold converse with them; they will have you still; they will hear and see you, as they contemplate how you are gone before them, rich in piety, and in the fear of God; they will love you still, for they will still love God, and therefore can never forsake you, nor themselves, nor Israel, nor religion, never, never!

And "when ye shall rise again in that morning" you will know them, and greet them joyfully, for you will have no need to be ashamed of them, or they of you. Such children are the pillars of our faith, and we have need of such. We, who are grown up, and advanced in years, are too feeble, too dull, too slow, too fond of our ease, too indolent, too unapt for the work that is to be done. We must bring up young workmen, and seek to furnish them with abundance of energy, courage, and wisdom; these, these must give proof, how much may be effected, by men who worship their God, revere Him, and love Him, with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their might. As often as we suffer this, 'our confession of faith,' to pass our lips, do we take this vow on ourselves:—to bring up in our sons and daughters, a pious, enlightened, and wise race of beings, and to make it our primary object that they shall live in God, and He in them.

My dear friends, live according to the spirit of this creed, and all that the earth has great and precious will

will come to maturity. The power of faith will enter into our lives, it will pervade our homes, our families, our schools, and our temples; and one day will combine with another, to the production of one beautiful and harmonious whole, firmly bound together by the bonds of love.

To this end, O Father of Mercies, lead us to penetrate deeper and deeper into Thy sacred instructions, and teach us the way to cling to Thee evermore heartily and more affectionately, as long as we live.

Amen.

SERMON X.

OUTWARD AIDS TO RELIGION.

DEUTERONOMY vi. 8, 9.

Is it your earnest desire to strive after the God-like, my friends? Of God's favor ye are certain, for long, long since was it assured to you, for long since He pointed out unto you the way that leads unto happiness, unto life. I therefore again exclaim, "O, happy we! how goodly is our portion, how pleasant our lot, how beautiful our inheritance! O, happy we, that we begin and end each day with the Divine sound, re-echoed by every heart, resounding throughout worlds: "HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE; AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT: AND THESE WORDS SHALL BE IN THY HEART, AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT SPEAK OF THEM CONTINUALLY." These words rightly understood, and faithfully obeyed, will, must, keep you in the path of virtue, for they furnish a key to a godly life. In my last sermon I called these words the Israelite's confession of faith; and, in explaining them, I endeavoured to make manifest to you, that they include the firm basis of our faith, i. e. the existence of one only God (in this belief the pious live); the working power

of our faith, i. e. love to God (which love embellishes the life of the pious); and further, that in these words we are instructed to promote this belief by seeking to make ourselves constantly more intimately acquainted with its all-important doctrines, and, by availing ourselves of every opportunity to render it familiar to our children, by means of striking examples. Will not such a course ensure to us the favour of God? I then told you that this confession of faith speaks also of visible and outward signs, by which our belief may be aided, and I promised that my discourse this day should refer to that point. I come, with the help of Him who hath appointed us unto His service, to fulfil that promise, and to render His holy word familiar to you.

AND THOU SHALT BIND THEM (the doctrine of the unity of God and of love unto Him), AS A TOKEN, UPON THY HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN THINE EYES; AND THOU SHALT WRITE THEM ON THE DOOR POSTS OF THINE HOUSE AND UPON THY GATES.

We are well aware, my friends, that the same, or at least similar passages, occur in the writings of the Prophets, as also in the Psalms and Proverbs, which cannot be interpreted according to the letter, but are to be taken figuratively. Nevertheless, it is easily to be understood, that the orator and poet, adopts a style totally different, from that of the instructor and legislator. The latter must be clear and intelligible, and seek to avoid the use of metaphors: thence it is, that besides the Rabbis, many learned and profound commentators on

the Sacred writings, some among them even, not being Israelites, are of opinion that actual scrolls are here alluded to, on which were to be inscribed the chief points of our religion, and which were to be affixed to the hand, the forehead, and the door-posts. We do not consider the Synagogue as the place in which it is necessary to enumerate these commentators, nor do we think it incumbent on us to examine their opinions, in order to declare ourselves for or against one or the other. But we feel ourselves called upon, here as everywhere, to elucidate the signification of the law. The meaning of this law is clearly no other than that indicated above. Outward aids and signs shall contribute to the formation and promotion of the religious and moral character of the Israelite.

We shall have illustrated this thought as far as the short space of an hour will enable us to do so, by directing our attention to the three following points:—

I.—The effect of such aids and symbols in general.

II.—The selection made for this end in the Mosaic code.

III.—The use which we ought to make of such aids and symbols, and the value we ought to attach to them.

Thou, all-merciful Father! enlighten our eyes in Thy law, in order that we err not and fail not, and lead not our brethren into error. Unite all hearts to honour Thy

name, in living a life worthy of Thee in Thy love; and let us strive after the good and godlike, now and for evermore! Amen.

I. A lengthened explanation is not necessary, in order that we should understand the term, outward aids and symbols. You are aware that the world by which we are surrounded, acts first on one sense, then on another, sometimes on several senses together, and that by these various influences, our resolutions and actions are determined. If these external influences I speak of, are calculated to improve our moral capabilities, if they soften and ennoble our hearts, if they, in one word, induce in us resolutions and deeds that contribute to our welfare, and that of our fellow-men, then are these impressions received from without, so many physical aids and symbols, of power to invite and lead men to all that is right and good, great and exalted, holy and god-like. I need only avail myself of your own experience, in order to show to you the effects of such outward physical aids. Is it not true, my dear friends, that you all believe in one God, and that I may declare it in your name to the whole earth, "THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE"? But answer me, when has your soul been most powerfully impressed by the thought of the existence of God, when has this thought penetrated most deeply into the inmost recesses of your heart? When, in the brightness of morn, you have beheld the sun go forth in his majesty, and have looked into his unfathomable ocean of fire, or when you have raised your eyes to the starry vault, and heard the worship of the spheres in the solemn stillness of the silent night, or when your eyes have rested on the

lofty mountain, towering boldly into the clouds, or when you have beheld God's works in the tossing of the foaming billows, and His wonders in the deep; in such moments, God became visible unto you, He came nearer to you, you saw the Lord sitting on His throne. You heard, felt His voice, almighty, glorious. This visible, tangible instruction, these outward aids and signs, acted more powerfully, produced firmer convictions, than could the most learned exposition in words, of the existence of the only One, the Eternal. Even though doubt may have been previously engendered in the mind by sophistical speculations and reveries, ye came and saw and conquered, conquered all doubt, all hesitation. Reason prostrated herself at the visible altar, and exclaimed, "God, Thou hast been, Thou art, Thou wilt ever be."

Not one of you, I trust, is wanting in faith in human virtue and in a higher existence; but when has your belief in virtue and in man's destiny grown in steadiness, energy, and enlightenment? When you have seen a high-minded man sacrifice himself for his duty, his faith, his brethren, or mankind, when you have seen a father living only for his children, a mother regardless of her own life, if at such a price that of her children could be preserved, blessed, embellished; when you have watched the aged man employing his failing powers, as though they were increasing, in order to accomplish something good and great for those whom he must leave behind—then you perceived in outward signs and tokens, that virtue is not an empty name, that our high destiny is not a delusion. Who is ignorant that here below we have no abiding-place, and that, at every door, the angel of

death is constantly knocking; at some, to-day, at others, to-morrow; at some, gently, at others, loudly? Who is there, I say, who knows not, and from whom are concealed, the wholesome precepts which this divine ordination originates, for our moral and religious conduct? Does not the most ignorant, the most frivolous, well know that he stands continually on a globe perforated with graves, and that there is nothing stedfast but that which he sees above him, that Heaven, for which he must live and work?

But answer me, when is the thought of man's transitory nature most active within you? When that great image of the transitoriness of all brightness, of all beauty is before you; when spring beholds her fairest children fade after a brief blossoming time; when autumn steals on you, and puts off one after another her most lovely ornaments and prepares for death, and when the rustling of the withered leaves sounds upon our ear like a funeral song, saying, 'Ye also wither like the foliage, your leaves also fall, and you must prepare with your own hand a cradle for your beloved infants, in the cold bosom of the earth!' At such moments, we have, doubtless, often said in our hearts, 'Beloved beings, we will henceforth fail in nothing towards any of you. As long as ye are permitted to remain with us, you shall find the father's, the mother's tender heart, to love you, to watch over you!' Yet how often have we neglected to fulfil this sacred vow! Say, when does it come before us again, in all its sanctity? When the lesson becomes more visible, more tangible; when a blossom really falls from the tree, when we look after our fair children with

tearful eyes; when we see youths and maidens sleeping on their early bier; when we visit the abodes of the dead, and the visible stones awaken emotion within us, and graves become a holy mountain unto us, testifying that no more than a span lies between the grave of the rich and the poor, of the exalted and the lowly, of father and son, mother and daughter, brother and brother, man and man. Know each other then, hold each other fast, love each other as long as your hearts still beat. Behold, these things which I have named to you, are visible signs and aids, which call forth in us images, emotions, purposes and resolves, that are beneficial to our moral and religious course. Whoever knows mankind, knows how often a mere trifle suffices to give a totally new direction to human actions. A striking expression from the lips of an affectionate mother, a look of mingled earnestness and kindness from a beloved father, has restored many a son and daughter to the arms of virtue: a fortunate or unfortunate occurrence in a family, frequently acts more beneficially on its members, than counsel and precept. We are creatures of sense, we are acted on by the senses, therefore, such physical aids and signs must continue indispensable to the promotion of a better way of life, until we shall have changed our present state of being, for another and a higher nature. This reflection conducts us to the second point of our discourse; the closer examination of these outward aids and signs, the observance of which is enjoined on its adherents, by the law of Moses.

II. God, one God, love to God in its widest sense, and in its most blessed consequences—of these,

the leading tenets of the Mosaic religion, our text thus speaks: AND THOU SHALT BIND THEM FOR A SIGN UPON THY HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN THINE EYES; AND THOU SHALT WRITE THEM ON THE DOORPOSTS OF THY HOUSE, AND ON THY GATES. These laws shall be brought before us by physical signs and tokens. If I cannot decide, as I before remarked, as to the correctness of the actual form which tradition has assigned to the three tokens of remembrance named in our text, viz. to the אוֹת עַל יָדֶךָ to the טוֹטָפֹת and מְזוּזוֹת still I must make, on this point, a three-fold remark: first, that the four (Paraschoth),* called by the Rabbis Thephilim, contain the leading truths of religion: viz., the existence of God (שמע), the promulgation of a law for the government of the world (והיה אם שמוע), the exhortation, to devote what is dearest to us to God, (קדש לי כל בכור) and to train our children to follow God and religion (והיה כי יביאך). Secondly, the connecting these memorials with the seat of feeling, the heart (ת״ש״ר כנגד הלב), and the seat of reason, the head (ת״ש״י על המוח), gives deep signification to this ordinance, and implies that the heart of the Israelite should only beat for sacred ends, his mind be occupied with sacred objects. Thirdly, it is clearly indicated by the mode in which that ordinance is observed, that the ennoblement of the heart is paramount to the cultivation of the mind (תפלין של יד קודמת). I make these remarks for the benefit only of such as consider these ceremonies and every other religious observance, as devoid of mean-

* They are to be found in Exodus, xiii. 1—16; Deut. vi. 4—10; ibid. ii. 13—22.

ing, because they are themselves devoid of reflection. I now return to the subject of my discourse. The Mosaic religion appeals to the heart and the intellect (Deut. ii. 13). According to its teaching, God is the purest spirit (ibid. iv. 14), and can be worshipped only by a pure heart and a clear understanding. Yet the hand, the eye, the word, spoken or written, are called on to give visible testimony, in outward signs, of this religion of heart and mind. The essence shall be embodied, the external shall aid the internal, means shall be employed to promote the morality and religion of life, of such a life as is adapted to man here below; to man here below, I repeat. The life of an angel would probably not require such outward aids and signs, and when the all-merciful Father shall call us to another sphere of action, we also shall share the lot of pure spirits; on earth we attain not unto this height. How easily can man on earth, of whatever class he may be, sink into the coarse or refined animal. Does he not often forget what he should, what he can do? Ask here and there, and listen to the answer. Is it not, therefore, absolutely necessary that man should be furnished with means to humanise his animal nature, to ennoble it? Or do you think worldly refinement is sufficient to protect him from such degeneracy? Sufficient! Certainly not. Do you not know individuals who, with all their refinement, are nothing better than refined animals? Ask again, and listen again to the answer. I enquire farther, whether you deem it difficult, or even impossible, to degenerate, even after the attainment of clear views, into error and darkness, and to become worshippers of idols, whether coarse or refined? Examine, as to this point, the history,

alike of nations and of individuals. Examine our age, and you will be answered. I have not yet done. Would it not be imagined that those who possessed much, would contribute liberally to the support of useful institutions? Who cannot relate circumstances that negative this supposition? Who can count the obdurate masters, the rich misers, whose desires are never satisfied, whose hands are never filled? Take but a superficial view of the laws of the Mosaic religion, and you will clearly see how wise is the selection of the physical aids and signs, whose observance is enjoined on us. What are our sabbaths and festivals, celebrated in the true spirit of the law, that "turning you away from worldly pleasures, from speaking your own words, from doing your own works" (Isaiah lviii. 13), what are they, I ask, but so many visible aids and pictures of life, fitted to awaken your reflection, to occupy your spirit, to raise your thoughts from creation to the Creator, from the present to the long past, and to bind your souls with the eternal cords of love, by which your forefathers were also bound to your Father, your God? What is their object but to remind you of your human dignity, in order that ye sell not yourselves as vassals unto the earth, in order that ye sink not into the dust? In these pictures of life, behold, there is one bright point of light which may beam on us with the full blaze of the meridian sun, I mean the day of atonement. For what is it designed but to depict unto you the conflict between sensuality and reason, in which so many mortals meet their death; it furnishes you with weapons with which you may fearlessly enter, and victoriously quit, the combat, self-control, self-conquest. It calls on you thus: wield them, you can wield them, you

must wield them, if you would maintain your superiority over the beast of the field. Do you know the laws which should regulate the dwelling of an Israelite? These laws are designed to form the sons and daughters of Israel to be pure and gentle, in word and deed; modest and chaste, even when the husband and wife are not watched by human eye; they are designed to induce and maintain inward and outward purity, in this peaceful sanctuary, to render the marriage tie more than a mere union for the indulgence of sensual pleasure; they are designed to make husband and wife, ever in each other's eyes, as bridegroom and bride. What are the laws that command us to open wide our hand to our poor brother, and to give succour to the needy stranger, not to withhold the wages of the labourer, to behave kindly and tenderly to our household, never to neglect the care of the Levite, the widow, and the orphan, to give the peace-offering and tithe? What are these and similar ordinances but means and aids for the cultivation of the heart, in order that selfishness, whose attendant is obduracy, may not enter therein; gentleness shall become our nature, the hand shall be for ever open, and with it the heart, to all that are poor and unhappy of every kind; the name "brother" shall ever be more sacred in our sight, when he who bears it is overwhelmed by calamity, and HE THAT HATH PITY UPON THE POOR, LENDETH UNTO THE LORD (Proverbs).

Out of the heart comes life; in order that the life of the heart may not fail, it shall pour itself out unto God; shall at certain periods be reminded of its relation to God; hence the laws that all should assemble in the

sacred spot, where the tribes appeared, where the seat of judgment was established, where dwelt righteousness and peace. In the holy temple, poetry, music, and song, were combined to elevate the moral feeling, sometimes to give a voice to conscience, and to raise man from earth to heaven. Prayer and supplication, instruction and advice, for young and old of both sexes (Deut. xxxi. 10—13.) The sanctification they there received they took with them into life, and long refreshed their souls with the remembrance of sweet and holy sounds. Yes! such physical aids do produce beneficial effects on the spirit. I need only remind you of the good that has been realised among us, since the establishment of this, our house of God; the symbol may it be of our religious regeneration, a gate to lead to heaven! Without this temple, without the sermon, without hymn and prayer, without organ and song, how many a mind might have wandered into devious paths; without this altar, we should have had to reckon among us many more who had become indifferent to God and religion, many more sinners, many less moral youths and maidens! Many a glorious work would not have been originated, and many of you would have forsaken the religion of your forefathers, would have been less good, less virtuous, less happy, less useful for earth, less sanctified for heaven. Here was the ladder uplifted which reaches unto heaven; mount it as angels, descend it as men, to work as men among men. Yes, whatever our spirit contains that is great and exalted, whatever that is kind and deep dwells in our heart, whatever strength and courage and hope is our portion, it is awakened, stimulated, developed, and fostered by the physical ends and means

prescribed to us by religion herself. O that we applied these means wisely, and used them in a manner pleasing to God! but this wish leads me to the third point in our discourse, the application and the value of such outward aids.

III. We have to answer here two questions, 'Who should make use of these physical aids?' and 'how are they to be used?' To the first question we answer, all, all who desire to live and die as religious and moral beings. Be your learning, your wisdom ever so great, still you are men whose intellectual and moral working is dependent on your physical powers. You cannot free yourselves from the external, and therefore you cannot dispense with the external. The wise of all ages will teach you, that in consequence of this dependance, but for excitement, encouragement from without, they could never have formed the exalted ideas, they could never have made such resolutions, nor have retained such energy for their fulfilment, as are indispensably necessary to the pursuance of a truly wise and a truly pious course of life; unless physical signs had facilitated to them the great work of their self-ennoblement and sanctification. I do not deny that of such external means, the wise and the pious, who have risen high in the scale of human perfectibility, who, to use an expression of Maimonides, 'do not gaze on the Lord of the world from without, but worship Him, in the midst of the temple;'* stand in less need than they who have not yet passed the period of youth: such I say, require

* More. Nebuhcim, part iii. dio. 59.

them not so much or so often, but they can in no wise, altogether dispense with them: they are also but men; backslidings are ever possible: "BEHOLD HE PUT NO TRUST IN HIS SERVANTS" (Job iv. 18), and the ancients said not unjustly, "The Lord calls the pious His, after their death only."* The answer given to the scorner of religion, Korach, according to a Rabbinical parable, is full of signification: Even to a scarf (טלית) entirely blue, blue fringes shall not be wanting (Numbers xv. 28.) On the doorposts of a house that is filled with books of the law, the holy commandments shall nevertheless be written† (Deut. xi. 20).

And who can least of all dispense with such aids? You, fathers and mothers, in your family circles. My friends, you fear and love the Lord, you confide in His dispensations, you feel that all you have, all you are, is from Him. But how shall your children become acquainted with this religious point of your character? You reply 'By our regularity and kindness in our domestic life.' A well-ordered divine service is certainly useful. Yet your children will not so clearly perceive that you thus act from motives of obedience to God. You speak so often of faults of temperament; well then, there may be also virtues of temperament! but demonstrate clearly and visibly to your children, in certain actions, that your virtue is exalted by religion, that all you do, all you leave undone, you do and leave undone for God. You can practise now as in the days of old,

* אין ה׳ק׳ב׳ה׳ קורא לצדיקים קדושים עד שינתנו בארץ

† Medrasch Rabba, div. 18.

the physical aids and signs of which I have already spoken to you, enjoined on us by the law of Moses, without their even interfering with your active duties. Prayer and hymn; the observance of the sabbath and the festivals; the practice in your house of ordinances, whose effect is the promotion of modesty, propriety, and purity. There is assuredly, nothing, my dear friends, more beautiful, than to see fathers and mothers perform a pious deed in the presence of their children; nothing more beautiful and beneficial, than that children should, in emulating their parents, learn to look up to heaven, to pray to heaven, that they should revere in them the guides who have led them on high. This, the children will never forget. By these means alone, you erect altars unto yourselves in the hearts of your children, which will endure eternally. But how shall these means be employed? I shall give sufficient answer to this question in saying,—

Let these means present a true reflection of religion itself. Use them reasonably and advisedly. Do not over-rate their value.

The outward man is usually the reflection of the inward man. Thus, and not otherwise is it with religion; she must, does make known her inward being, by outward manifestations. Ceremonies and customs should present a faithful image. The religion of the Israelites is great, is pure, in its doctrines and truths; the ceremonies by which that religion is expressed, must be in accordance with that greatness, that purity. That which is superadded and manifestly opposed to its spirit, that which offends the moral sense, shocks the feelings, and

disregards the laws of order and beauty,* should not be accepted and practised, either in our domestic, or in our public worship. The elders and teachers of the congregation, if they would be worthy of these names, should direct all their energies to giving to the public service of God, a form, more lovely, more pleasing unto Him, in order that piety and devotion may return, and dwell in houses whence they have long since disappeared. Alas, O Israel! that in so many of thy synagogues, the house of God, the gate of Heaven, may no longer be found. Thy houses of God, should present a true picture of the doctrine which refreshes the soul, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eyes, makes wise the simple. But is it thus? The jewel is so precious, so rare; wherefore, do ye not seek for it a fitter setting? Employ all physical, visible means, for the promotion of piety, rationally and advisedly. If reason is not exercised, if she is not permitted to use her right of judgment, then imagination assumes unbridled sway, and customs and ceremonies come to be considered as religion itself, in the observance of which reason can discover nothing reasonable, of whose signification and appropriateness it can furnish no account. Men then delight in vague feelings, and are satisfied if the heart is touched for a time, but not permanently improved. Many among the educated classes are disposed now to this mysticism, this visionary and dreamy state. They find pleasure in this childish sport with feelings and emotions. You will object to me, that among us there is no danger of this. What mean you by this reply? for in Israel truly there are

* The Ancients wisely teach אנוהו לפניו במצות.

but too many men and women, who are satisfied with this half-light, and consider it piety. Do you mean that there is no danger for you, because you seek often this house of prayer; for you, you would say, who are tolerably enlightened, have selected but a few of the many ceremonies. But I say unto you, that your's is not a reasonable selection, for I know many among you, who, in the few physical aids they do employ, make many errors; they adhere to empty, superstitious customs, to cabalistic mysteries and sayings, and reject suitable and appropriate aids to virtue. Do you desire examples? I will give you some. The holy solemnisation of the sabbath and festivals, is, to many among you, a matter of indifference; but you fear, ye observers of times, to commence a business, or to remove into a new dwelling on certain days. Some of you consider prayer and devotion as objects of small import, but when you do pray, you fear to pray in any language except Hebrew, which you do not comprehend. You disobey the Mosaic ordinances for the Day of Atonement, without self-reproach, but you fear to be present at the service of the dead (הזכרת נשמות) lest it should injure your parents, who are still living.* Religious customs that would ennoble and exalt life, remain unobserved; but in cases of death, customs are observed, which owe their existence to prejudices, which, probably, originally sprang from heathenism. Why is this? Whence is this? Because imagination rules, and reason is become her handmaiden. But where the reason is not exercised, it is impossible to look around freely, to judge

* An ancient prejudice among unthinking men.

rightly. Who can deny, that profound, heartfelt devotion, is almost indispensable to the attainment of true piety? But if reason is not consulted, you adhere anxiously to certain modes and moments of prayer, that are directly opposed to the essence of prayer itself. Who can deny, that the outward distinction of festival and fast days may give a pious tendency and tone to the heart, and in this way lead it to religion. But if you do not also employ your reason, you may be induced to consider that observance, as a sufficient pretext for begging or borrowing the outlay it involves; nay, you might even thus find an excuse for dishonesty, when, in fact, it would be better even to make the day of the festival a day of work for honest maintenance, than thus render religion, a pretext for a recourse to fraud. In short, if you do not employ these means according to reason, error cannot be avoided, and you will lose much more than you appear to gain (Isaiah i. and lviii). Do not place too high a value on such aids to virtue; they are the means and not the end. There ever were and are yet many individuals in Israel who imagine themselves to be pious, and better than the rest, because they observe a vast number of ceremonies, whose whole meaning has long been forgotten; because they keep many fast days, utter many prayers, read much and often in the sacred writings, as if the dead letter could open heaven to them. And these things are held to be religion, while religion itself is disregarded. O, it is a grievous disease, from which ye suffer much, ye children of my people! Thence there arise so many pretended saints, who form such imperfect and pernicious conceptions of a godly life, which consists really in the most

exact fulfilment of our duties. Thence the ridiculous blindness, with which so many look down with contempt, on such as think differently and more justly. Pride is concealed beneath their tatters. Thence the blind zeal with which they oppose all institutions that agree not with their ideas. Thence it is that important objects are neglected, because they are occupied with minor matters.* They have written those words on the hand, the brow, the door-posts, 'Love the Lord, serve him with all your heart, worship not idols, dedicate your children to virtue;' but they are but lifeless tokens, they sustain not life in life, dead letters and words they remain. O deluded ones! they hope to be healed, merely because they read the prescription of their physician, and frequently comprehend not the language in which that prescription is written. No! to over-value these means is just as sinful as to neglect their use altogether, and perhaps more so, because we may at last persuade ourselves, that they are in themselves religion, whereas they can only *lead* man to religion. They ought to make us more ready, more conscientious and true, in the fulfilment of our duties; they ought to enable us to overcome our pernicious inclinations, to suppress our evil passions, ardently to follow the right, zealously to promote the good, to become righteous men, faithful subjects, God-loving Israelites. Is this attained?—Blessed, thrice blessed are we!—We may then consider ourselves to be

* The words in Medrasch are remarkable:—

אל תוסף על דבריו פן יוכיח בך ונכזבת (משלי) תני ר' חייא שלא תעשה את הגדר יתר על העיקר שלא יפול ויקצץ את הנטיעה

true worshippers of God, Israelites without guile, who live and act in the spirit of our ancient and eternal law. Then may we be convinced that the blessing of God will rest upon us, and will not depart from us and our children, and children's children, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XI.

THE TRIALS AND SORROWS OF LIFE.

NUMBERS xxi. 4—7.

BELOVED hearers! every one born of woman, has felt that life presents us with alternate scenes of pain and pleasure. We are mortal men: beings whose hearts sometimes swell with the joys, (רוחה), at others sink beneath the sorrows, of existence (צרה); whose eyes now fill with tears of rapture, now overflow with those of anguish; whose hands are sometimes raised courageously towards heaven, at others, sink despondingly down to earth. Who, here below can hold the scales, and determine whether in the life of the individual, joy and sorrow are equally balanced; or further, whether among mankind generally, there exists an equality of distribution to each, of these component parts of existence? So much is certain, that for no one pilgrim on earth, is his course free from troubles and trials. Even to wanderers who travel beneath bright skies, and along smooth paths, and are provided with all things that can render their journey pleasureable, even unto such, I say, there come days, on which they have to contend with powerful obstacles to their progress. The star of day is suddenly

obscured, and instead of the expected flowers, thorns spring up on the right and on the left.

That I term our life a journey will not appear strange to God-fearing men, who well know that we are but sojourners on the earth, as all our forefathers were, and that the days of our years, are days of pilgrimage; who know that the true path of life, conducts us on high, unto that Salem, which the Lord hath prepared for all who wait on Him. But we have many trials and afflictions to endure, ere we reach that land of peace, that land of our inheritance. Who is there that has not already paid his portion of tribute? Who is there among us, my dear friends, who stands not on a grave, in which some one or other of his earthly joys lies buried? How often has your heart been filled with sorrow, when plans that promised happiness, have been frustrated when you deemed their consummation at hand! Poverty and care have combined to render you and your's miserable. You have shared the couch of sickness with those dear to you! You again, have felt your lot to be the hardest, when it compelled you to part from beings, the dearest, the most beloved! How many tender relationships, how many near and dear ties, have been dissolved by death? Has he not torn the beloved wife from the bleeding heart of one? from another the faithful friend? from a third, the beloved brother? And, fathers and mothers, how often has it been your lot to see those nipped by the untimely storm, whose opening blossoms promised the fairest fruit! But who can count the tears that are shed by the eyes of man, who shall tell the sighs that burst from man's bosom, who can enumerate the

scenes of woe, that spring up on man's path through life?

Are they then, in the right, who say, 'The Lord has abandoned the earth, and His eye looketh no more down on the children of dust?' Are they then in the right who maintain, that the earth is the abode of pain alone, and who laugh at us if we declare, in the words of Scripture, "ALL WHICH THE LORD HATH DONE IS GOOD." Are they then, in the right who murmur, and utter words of lamentation and despair? No, no, my beloved friends, they are not in the right. The Lord hath not abandoned the earth; He carrieth the children of men on His parental bosom. Our earth is not a vale of sorrow, and all that comes from the Lord is good. His children shall not break forth into complaints against their Father and their Father's ways. No; they shall seek to attain a just view of the afflictions and adversities of life; they must do this, all must do this, who call themselves children of God, and who have set forth on, and continue with us, the journey towards their and our eternal home. Permit me, then, my dear fellow-travellers, once more to greet you, after an interruption of our intercourse, which has been caused by one of the trials of which I speak. O that I may this day enable you to view the burthens and trials of life in a softer light, from a higher point! I will first read to you the passage from our weekly portion, which has furnished the subject of my present discourse.

AND THEY JOURNEYED FROM MOUNT HOR BY THE WAY OF THE RED SEA, TO COMPASS THE LAND OF EDOM:

AND THE SOUL OF THE PEOPLE WAS MUCH DISCOURAGED BECAUSE OF THE WAY. AND THE PEOPLE SPAKE AGAINST GOD AND AGAINST MOSES, WHEREFORE HAVE YE BROUGHT US UP OUT OF EGYPT, TO DIE IN THE WILDERNESS? FOR THERE IS NO BREAD, NEITHER IS THERE ANY WATER; AND OUR SOUL LOATHETH THIS LIGHT BREAD. AND THE LORD SENT FIERY SERPENTS AMONG THE PEOPLE, AND THEY BIT THE PEOPLE, AND MUCH PEOPLE OF ISRAEL DIED. THEREFORE THE PEOPLE CAME TO MOSES, AND SAID, WE HAVE SINNED, FOR WE HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST THEE; PRAY UNTO THE LORD THAT HE TAKE AWAY THE SERPENTS FROM US. AND MOSES PRAYED FOR THE PEOPLE.

The poor wanderers believed that the goal was reached: Palestine lay before them. The people of Edom (xx. 14—21) refused to give his brother, Israel, a passage through his border. As the Lord had strictly forbidden the Israelites to meddle with them, (Deut. ii. 4—6) they were compelled, as our text tells us, to compass the land of Edom. They sustained a great loss at this same period: Aaron, the High Priest, was gathered unto his people, a loss they deeply felt and mourned. Opposing hosts came forth against them; AND THE SOUL OF THE PEOPLE WAS MUCH DISCOURAGED BECAUSE OF THE WAY (ותקצר נפש העם בדרך). Who could have reproached the people, had they sought to relieve their sorrow by tears, their bosoms by sighs? But, THE PEOPLE SPAKE AGAINST GOD AND AGAINST MOSES (וידבר העם באלהים ובמשה); their complaints were inconsiderate, unwise, unworthy of men who acknowledged

God. During their manifold wanderings, they had not yet attained to a just view of the obstacles that had arisen on the way: thence the well-merited punishment came upon them. We, my beloved brethren, will seek to avoid this error. We are also on a journey, which we shall not accomplish without meeting with disasters. Many a bright prospect will be clouded over, just as the goal is attained, many a beloved friend will part from us, our brothers will meet us as enemies. We will employ this hour, then, in learning to look upon the trials and sorrows on the journey of life, from a higher point of view. You shall carry hence the conviction, that God, in permitting such to visit us, exercises his parental love; for it is by means of these trials that we attain to clearer perceptions, that we increase in goodness and amiability, and thus endowed, become ever richer and richer in the joys and delights of life. Let us devote our serious attention to the examination of these points, let us seek the Father of love, in all His ways, well remembering that He maketh us low, in order to exalt us. Amen.

I. There are great truths and lessons, my dear friends, a knowledge of which is necessary to our well-being. But we resist such knowledge. We are prevented in part, by our pride from accepting these truths and lessons, in part by our long-cherished errors and prejudices, which rise up like barriers between us and this precious wisdom. Want comes upon us, sorrows befall us; then see, the veil falls from our eyes, and what we previously rejected, or recognised but imperfectly, becomes clear and convincing, and an important gain throughout our subsequent life. Do you think it matter of indifference,

whether you know thoroughly or imperfectly, what are the characters and dispositions of your nearest companions, of those with whom you are the most closely connected during this journey of life? When have you, I ask, learnt to understand them, when have you looked into their hearts? When the path was rugged, difficult, dark, and strewn over with rocks and stones,—then did you discover what treasures you possessed, one in a wife, another in a son, a third in a daughter. Many a heart that you previously misunderstood and wounded, then lay open before you, you saw how freely it had bled beneath the stroke. When have you discovered that there are friends more faithful than brothers? and again, that you called others friends, who neither knew nor deserved the name? When you had to contend with difficulties, to struggle with want and misery, in the still solitude of the sick chamber, at the approach of death, when man seeks his fellow man. How many have smiled incredulously, when warned by their religious instructors, that a guilty conscience is the burthen in life, heaviest to be borne, and smiled again, when assured by them, of the blessedness of him who has no cause for self-reproach! Yes, how many are there, even among good men, who are not thoroughly convinced of the importance of this truth, whose inmost soul this truth has failed to penetrate! By means only of the trials of life, could this great truth gain entrance into their hearts. The wretchedness would be increased tenfold of the unhappy one, who, borne down far more by the consciousness of guilt, than by the calamities that had befallen him, would be compelled to acknowledge, 'He who sows iniquity, will reap sorrow; I have prepared my own

lot!' His follies and vices would appear before his mind in all their native deformity, and the cup of sorrow would become more bitter. On the contrary, the guiltless, conscientious man, carries within himself, the most healing balsam for all his wounds; the reflection that he is not the cause of his own misfortunes, will aid him in the endurance of the severest trials (רוח איש יכלכל מחלהו). He may exclaim with the poet, and thence draw strength and consolation, 'Though soul and body faint, the judge within and above me condemns me not, therefore I fear not!'

My dear friends, answer, in what do men think, for the most part, that human greatness and worth consist? I answer, in all things, save in humanity. The worth and greatness of men, are placed in external and low objects. In the sight of one, are sensual pleasures the whole man; to another, accumulated treasures are the whole life; to a third, rank and title are the whole of human dignity; to a fourth, the connection with, and society of, these so termed great and powerful ones of the earth, the whole aim and end and meaning of existence. If we were only to hint that they may one day be deprived of these baubles, we might perhaps, hear them lament with other worshippers of idols: "YE HAVE TAKEN AWAY MY GODS, AND WHAT HAVE I MORE?" * Even the higher ones among our race, are often so much spoiled by their mother the earth, that they mistake the aims of life; but if the Lord permits you to be visited by storms on your path through life, if immature

* Judges xviii. 24.

fruit fall from the tree, you then become aware of, you feel the folly, the absurdity, of placing the worth and greatness of man, and the ends and aims of life, in objects whence, in the hour of adversity, we can derive neither consolation nor protection; you are then convinced that the rank and dignity of man, endowed with reason, consists in things far different from the accidental gifts of worldly fortune; you are convinced that you are nothing, if you are not capable of depending on yourself, on your inward dignity. If we attain to these and similar views, my dear companions on the rough and thorny path of life, we shall learn to consider its evils under a different aspect.

II. On this difficult and thorny path, treasures yet more precious become our portion, for on such a path do we acquire the qualities most worthy of love. But by means of virtue alone do we become really amiable; the more virtuous, the more worthy of love are we. I pre-suppose that I am speaking to men, who at once admit the irrefragable truth of this principle, and I proceed to demonstrate to you, how many virtues are to be gained, if our path on life's journey be thus thorny and difficult. Think first of the great and glorious souls of which the most holy Scripture tells us, think of the ever increasing virtue of Joseph, Moses, and David. They rose to the highest places in the school of adversity. On their difficult journey, their hearts and intellects were matured, therein did they become great and noble-minded men. What we see in the days of old, recurs in our own lives. This active youth who works unceasingly at his self-development and improvement, and whose progress is

the result of his own efforts, that reflecting man, who allows himself not to be dazzled by the brightest rays of fortune—both assuredly have had want and care for their instructresses. On what path, my brother, did you attain to that simplicity and absence of pretension, which, with all your talents, and acquirements, and large worldly possessions, so advantageously distinguish you among your people? In days of pain and suffering, you discerned that no one man is indispensable on earth; the other wanderers went on their way without you, they continued their journey, even though you had quitted their side. Who is the virtuous woman, the faithful mother, the model for others of her sex, "who openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness; her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."* She attained this moral elevation amidst sorrow and anxiety, by the side of the couch of suffering, at the death-bed of those who were dear to her. Who among princes and governors never ceased to be men, who on the throne, continued to be kind and noble of heart? Those on whose path, manifold difficuties and obstacles had arisen. Wherever you observe the exercise of gentleness, patience, humility, forgiveness, self-denial, perseverance in good, active endeavour for the general weal; examine closely, you will find that all these pearls of price have been formed from the tears of sorrow and adversity. I name last the fairest of all qualities; love, love of man. As long as the way is

* Proverbs xxxi. 26, 28, 29.

smooth and void of peril, and leads us through lands where plenty reigns, and on which the sun sheds his warm and cheering rays, we may travel contentedly, nay joyously side by side; but we think not of intimate union of the inward being, of forming indissoluble ties. I might liken our position then, to that of two streams which flow smoothly on side by side; they follow the same course, their waves kiss each other, but they do not unite, they do not flow into each other, and the difference of hue is discernible to every eye. But the storm arises, the waves rise higher, their waters mix and are confounded, and the two currents appear to have become one. You have already applied the metaphor. Most men, so long as it goes well with them, are so engrossed by their own prosperity, that they are either ignorant of, or become indifferent to, the distress and anxiety of others: they pass coldly and unfeelingly by those, who seek a helping hand and a sympathising heart. Not the sun of prosperity, but the fire of affliction it is, which will first cause this icy coating of selfishness to dissolve. We endure want; we now feel for our brethren who are pining for bread. We are sick; we now seek out the hut, in which suffering humanity lies unwatched and unaided. Those whom we dearly love are taken from us; now we feel and sympathise in the affliction of those, who have already consigned the remains of many a beloved object to the silent tomb. We are misconstrued, despised, persecuted, oppressed; now for the first time are we impelled to search for such as are borne down to the earth and well nigh overwhelmed, by envy, calumny, and prejudice. Is it not thus, beloved hearers?

In what memorable periods did men and nations unite? When were our long-persecuted brethren restored to their human rights? When their persecutors themselves felt the pain of being oppressed, maltreated and reviled. We learn thus on the thorny and difficult path, to feel as men, to love as brothers, and above all to develop the highest powers and qualities, in ourselves and in our race.

III. It is equally certain, my friends, that the trials and afflictions of our earthly pilgrimage, give us a more intimate knowledge alike of our God and our religion. Perverse generation of men! Would it not be thought, that especially by a path that is strewed with heaven's richest blessings, you would be conducted on high, would be raised unto that Heaven, unto God, unto Him who hath confided unto you, ye happy ones, so large a proportion of this world's gifts? But the reproach that was addressed to your forefathers that you "WAXED FAT AND FORSOOK THE GOD WHO MADE YOU," applies to men in general. When the gifts are many and precious, then is the giver forgotten; when the sky is bright, then we behold not the Divine benefactor who showereth down His treasures upon us; we then ask with profane lips, "WHO IS THE LORD THAT WE SHOULD SERVE HIM, WHAT WILL IT AVAIL US THAT WE CALL ON HIS NAME?" Obstacles must arise on the way, serpents must attack and wound us, misery and want visit us, and death come down upon the children of men; then we cry unto the Lord and say, "WE HAVE SINNED!" 'O Lord, when sorrow visits them they call upon Thee, when Thou chastisest them they return unto Thee,' says one of the prophets of old; and I this

day repeat his words. The thunder must be heard on high, the storm must rage, the dark clouds must cover the expanse, before many (alas, how many!) awake from their delirium and behold the Judge, who, to use the language of men, can employ severity and sternness, when gentle measures fail, or remain unheeded. Something striking must occur in order to warn you when evil is growing gigantic, as soon as you cease to know and to possess the stay of religion, as soon as you cease to hear the parental heart beat for you, on which you can repose and be healed.

Yet the gain is still greater than this: for pains and sorrows render religion, even to you, ye good and pious men to whom she was previously not strange, yet more familiar. You yourselves experience it, that men cannot aid us, the great cannot protect us, and that from God alone comes salvation; you become ever more convinced that He listeneth unto your voice from out of His sanctuary, that they "whose strength is in God, in whose heart are His ways, fear no evil, even though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death"; you perceive that from out of pain comes joy, and that the seed watered by tears, produces a rich harvest. At the death-bed of your beloved ones, it becomes unto you a certainty, that our Heavenly Father neither created, nor gave them unto us for this earth, and that therefore, not one of them will be lost unto us. After this manner also, you will become ever more firmly convinced, that the omnipotence, the love, the justice, the wisdom, the mercy, and the holiness of God, form, in their combined workings, the Providence of God. But above all, that will be confirmed unto you, to which our religion so

especially refers; "that God pitieth and befriendeth those who suffer in innocence; that He executeth the judgment of the fatherless and the widow, raiseth the fallen, healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds."* Thus will ye ever penetrate further and further into the sanctuary of religion, and become ever more and more conversant with God and His divine attributes.

Now, bring to your mind all your brothers and sisters, who on this toilsome journey have attained to the soundest views, to the highest qualities, who have thereby become ever more familiar with God and religion, and who now, healed and ennobled, again participate in the world and its joys. Confess it, my dear friends, life has much more to present to them, than to the children of fortune; the first enjoy where the power of enjoyment is blunted in the second; that which remains to them acquires fresh and greater charms. If you have known want, my beloved friends, you find that which you have restored to you, increase in value tenfold. A flower garden is to you a paradise: if you have known the sufferings of a sick bed, the greater will be your enjoyment of renewed health, of the sweet habit of existence, of living before the Lord, in the circle of all who are dear to you; you have felt how costly a treasure is health, you will willingly resign all other goods, and yet deem yourselves fortunate, blessed. You have experienced how painful it is to be mistaken in your fellow-men; you will the more highly appreciate the blessing, if but one heart really understand and love you. If this one

* Isaiah lvii. 15; Psalm cxlvii. 3; Deut. x. 18.

remain to you, you will consider, and justly consider, such communion to be the purest, the highest delight vouchsafed to us in life. You have seen one of your children, or a beloved friend, stand on the brink of the grave. Every word, every look of those whom you look upon, as having almost arisen from the tomb, causes you increased joy. Yes, you see one of your beloved ones depart from you, without having it in your power to detain him. The circle of those who are dear to you is thereby narrowed, but the chain is bound yet more firmly around them, for the remaining links hold faster together. Those who are left behind cling to each other more closely, more affectionately than before, and work and strive for, and in each other.

Can you regard the trials and afflictions of life, when considered from this point, when viewed in this light, but as so many fresh fountains, whence God permitteth us to draw the living waters, that contribute to the moral health and well-being of those belonging to us? Then accept, in conclusion, three of the many valuable teachings that proceed from this thought, and which I will lay before you in very few words. If it is really by means of hardship and affliction that we attain to healthy views, if thereby the most amiable qualities are developed within us, if through them we advance in the true knowledge of God and religion, if they adorn the joys of life with fresh charms, then do you act foolishly, unreasonably, and like wayward children, if you break forth into extravagant lamentations, perhaps even murmur against the dispensations of the Almighty, against the ways by which he leadeth you unto a happy, a

glorious end. Though to lament be permitted us, yet to murmur against God is sinful. We may not be able to suppress our sighs, but to pass a week, a day, nay even an hour in useless sighing, as though we were born only to misery, as though we were a prey to chance, is sinful. We are permitted to weep, but to cast the tearful eye down towards earth, instead of raising it to heaven is sinful, is a reproach addressed by us to our Instructor on high; a reproach instead of a thanksgiving. "Blessed be the Lord day by day; He putteth on us the burden, but enableth us to bear it; sendeth deliverance and help, humbleth us in order to exalt us." But this is the second lesson which we may derive from these higher views. Not only ought we not to allow ourselves to complain; we ought, on the contrary, to thank the Eternal Disposer of our days, for the sorrows which He hath apportioned unto us. If by these misfortunes and difficulties we attain to a wiser, a more amiable, a more pious and more cheerful manner of life, then will we bless the hand that thus leadeth us. It is most desirable that we should direct the attention of the Israelites of the present day to that which the religious instructors of old required of us; it will be understood and practised by a mind truly submissive to God.* 'As ready and heartfelt as are your thanks to God for the blessings of life, equally ready and cheerful should be your acknowledgments to Him for its evils.' I know more than one pious soul, who, by virtue of this instruction, has exchanged, not only without a murmur, but in a tranquil and cheerful spirit, a palace for a hut: has retained a contented mind amid the

* חייב אדם לברך על הרעה כשם שמברך על הטובה וכן אמר רבא לא נצרכה אלא לקבלינחו בשמחה

meanest labour, when the Almighty called upon him to descend from the height He had permitted him to attain; more than one pious soul, who, though infirm of body, was cheerful of spirit, and who exclaimed at the departure of beloved friends, 'BLESSED BE THOU WHO JUDGEST IN TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS' (ברוך דין אמת), with as much calmness and self-possession, as that with which at the receipt of any great good, he uttered the blessing, 'BE THOU EXALTED AND PRAISED, ALL-MERCIFUL FATHER' (ברוך חטוב וחמטיב). Yet more, beloved friends! we will not permit the wish for complete immunity from care and sorrow to arise within us: they benefit us, are necessary for us enigmatical beings, holding, as we do, a middle place between the higher spirits and the beasts of the field. What was said of our forefathers, applies equally to us, "The Lord hath proved thee, and humbled thee, to do thee good at the latter end."*

However paradoxical it may appear, yet it is, and ever will be true, that were all sorrow to disappear from the earth, then would the earth really become a vale of sorrow. For as incapable as is our eye here below, of beholding truth in all its immensity, so little is our heart formed and calculated for the enjoyment of uninterrupted happiness. If our Heavenly Father held in the right hand an existence of continued grace and unmixed delight, in the left a life in which tears and sorrows had a part, I should embrace the latter, and exclaim, 'Grant me this lot, O my Father! uninterrupted happiness is

* Deuteronomy viii.

not for man on earth. Thou, All-merciful, Thou wilt not permit our burden to be heavier than we can bear. Even though we should feel Thy chastening hand, by Thy compassion will it be guided.' Therefore, my dear friends, we will tranquilly await the future; only there will our joy be pure and entire; only there will our sighs be stilled. On high, on high only, no storms rage, no thorns pierce, no hearts break, no soul faints, no forlorn one mourns. Let us, beloved companions, think and act on life's thorny path, in this spirit, in this holy trust. Let us perform the journey worthily, let us cling faithfully unto one another; let us meet each other lovingly, until we are called away from 'the trials and sorrows of life,' until the Father's welcome voice summons His children to their blessed, their eternal home.

Amen, Amen.

SERMON XII.

THE SEPARATION FROM THOSE WE LOVE.

NUMBERS xxvii. 12—23.

GRANT, O God, that we may die the death of the pious, that our end may resemble theirs! Teach us, O our Father in heaven, to number our days in order that we may attain to wisdom and piety of soul. We should remember our end and the number of our days, how small it is; we should remember that Thou hast meted hours unto us with a span, that the longest human life is as nothing before Thee,—that all is vanity if we only seek for what is vain, if we follow vain shadows, if we strive after trifles, if we heap up treasures and know not who shall inherit them. Therefore, O Father, if Thou teach us to live, teach us also to quit life as the righteous quit it! O that we may die as the pious die, that our end may resemble theirs! Amen.

Life, beloved friends, is for the most part made up of union and separation, and small, often very small, is the space that divides them. For like joy and sorrow, meeting and parting often lie close together. And these are perhaps the circumstances under which the dispen-

sation is the least painful. That hearts that have found each other, should be parted before the cords that bind them are firmly intertwined, were a minor evil! Far sadder is the separation from persons whom long, long years of love have endeared to us; far more painful is the breaking up of associations, in which other beings have become a part of ourselves, and in which the affection of these friends has each day wound round life a fresh bond of soul. But such links are loosened, for separation is our lot here below! Yet the heart sinks at the thought that the hour of parting may be at hand; bleeds, well-nigh breaks, when that hour is come, and the dear associates must leave each other for years, perhaps for ever! Yet more, when by the separation all visible communion is terminated, and the endeared relationship can never be renewed under its present form: when death has pronounced his irrevocable decree of separation! He who knows such partings from his own experience, knows also what an influence they exercise over our whole being, how we yield to the sorrow, cherish it in our bosoms, and are in danger of consuming our best powers in burning love and vain, vain yearnings for the dead. The oftener such things betide us, the greater the uncertainty as to when we shall receive the summons to depart hence, the more beneficially shall we be influenced by the contemplation of men, whose strength and courage fail not under the pressure of feelings powerful as these, but who remain stedfast amidst separations the most painful, the most heart-rending, and know how, as it beseems the pious and the wise, even herein to exercise moderation. The example of these noble beings cannot fail to contribute

to our improvement and ennoblement. Well then, my brethren, I will shew you to-day one of these high-minded mortals, ye shall learn by his example 'How the summons to quit for ever the circle of the beloved ones, should act upon the God-fearing Israelite.'

AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, GET THEE UP INTO THIS MOUNT ABARIM, AND SEE THE LAND WHICH I HAVE GIVEN UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. AND WHEN THOU HAST SEEN IT, THOU ALSO SHALT BE GATHERED UNTO THY PEOPLE, AS AARON THY BROTHER WAS GATHERED. AS YE HAVE REBELLED AGAINST MY COMMANDMENT IN THE DESERT OF ZIN, IN THE STRIFE OF THE CONGREGATION, TO SANCTIFY ME AT THE WATER BEFORE THEIR EYES: THAT IS THE WATER OF MERIBAH IN KADESH IN THE WILDERNESS OF ZIN. AND MOSES SPAKE UNTO THE LORD, SAYING, LET THE LORD, THE GOD OF THE SPIRITS OF ALL FLESH, SET A MAN OVER THE CONGREGATION, WHO MAY GO OUT BEFORE THEM, AND WHO MAY GO IN BEFORE THEM, AND WHO MAY LEAD THEM OUT, AND WHO MAY BRING THEM IN; THAT THE CONGREGATION OF THE LORD BE NOT AS SHEEP WHICH HAVE NO SHEPHERD. AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, TAKE THEE JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN, A MAN IN WHOM IS THE SPIRIT, AND LAY THINE HAND UPON HIM; AND SET HIM BEFORE ELEAZER THE PRIEST, AND BEFORE ALL THE CONGREGATION; AND GIVE HIM A CHARGE IN THEIR SIGHT. AND THOU SHALT PUT SOME OF THINE HONOUR UPON HIM, THAT ALL THE CONGREGATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL MAY

BE OBEDIENT. AND HE SHALL STAND BEFORE ELEAZER THE PRIEST, WHO SHALL ASK COUNSEL FOR HIM AFTER THE JUDGMENT OF URIM BEFORE THE LORD: AT HIS WORD THEY SHALL GO OUT, AND AT HIS WORD THEY SHALL COME IN, BOTH HE, AND ALL THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WITH HIM, EVEN ALL THE CONGREGATION. AND MOSES DID AS THE LORD COMMANDED HIM: AND HE TOOK JOSHUA, AND SET HIM BEFORE ELEAZER THE PRIEST, AND BEFORE ALL THE CONGREGATION: AND HE LAID HIS HANDS UPON HIM, AND GAVE HIM A CHARGE, AS THE LORD SPOKE BY THE HAND OF MOSES.

Our portion of to-day informs us first, according to what rule Palestine was to be divided among the tribes (chap. xxvi. 51—56); farther, how the daughters of Zelophehad claimed the inheritance of their deceased father (who died without sons), and had their claim allowed (chap. xxvii. 1—7), and then Moses receives the divine command to get him up into the Mount Abarim, and thence to enjoy the glorious view of the promised land, and when still absorbed in the full enjoyment of that view, to be gathered unto his people, as Aaron was gathered. So far our weekly portion of to-day. Whether Moses accepted that summons, how it acted upon him, in what way he used it, herewith begins the next week's portion, whence I have extracted a passage, which cannot, from the close connection existing between them, be well separated from the previous portion. Thus am I enabled at once to shew you by the example of our instructor and benefactor, how to live and how to depart

from life, or, as I have said above, how the summons to leave our beloved ones for ever, should act upon the God-fearing Israelite. Hear and perceive.

I. "Get thee up into the mount Abarim; behold the land into which thou shall not enter: after the last glance thou must die!" Thus does the voice of the Lord call. And Moses, Moses hears and obeys the call. To this point I would first direct your attention. Immediately before our text, the Lord said unto Moses, "To the daughters of Zelophehad thou shalt surely give possession of an inheritance" (chap xxvii. 7). The hope might peradventure thence spring up in his heart, that God had listened unto the petition of his servant, to be allowed to live, to teach in that good land (Deut. iii. 23—25); the stern decree might be abrogated, deferred, "Thou shalt die in this desert." What is not man ready to believe, in accordance with the longings of his heart! Not so the godly man Moses. He knows that the God whose law he teaches, is no man that He should repent, nor a son of man that He should deceive; therefore he deceives not himself: he must depart, and he prepares for departure; he listens to the Divine call, 'Quit the circle of your beloved ones! depart from among them.' Do you also hear the voice of God, who warns you of your departure? Do you, my dear friends, hear the summons to separate? Sooner or later, the parting word must be spoken! God has placed a cherub to keep the way of the tree of life, no son or daughter of Israel shall reach unto it, in order to eat of the fruit and live eternally here below.* Yet we act so often

* Gen. iii. 24.

as though we needed not ever to go hence; we shut our ear that we may not hear, when the voice of the Lord calleth: "Lift up thine eyes, and behold once more the earth on which thou desirest to remain, and then be gathered unto thy people as thy brothers and sisters have been gathered." But you would ask, 'Can we hear the voice of God in words as clear and unequivocal as were those addressed to Moses?' Not one only, a thousand such voices are constantly warning us of the approaching separation. As many ordinances as exist in the natural world around us and in human nature, that call upon us to live, so many are there that warn us to die. When the cheerful light of day sinks with each evening, first into twilight, then into darkness; when youth, beauty, the magnificence of nature, the glory of art, joy and happiness, all, all are withered as a blossom by the stormy wind,—when men who have wound themselves lovingly around our hearts, leave us so quickly; when ties which bound us with gentle force are suddenly loosed; when beings go before us, who were indispensable to our happiness; when a beloved child, a tender mother, an honoured father, a brother, a sister, are called away to their eternal home: say, are these not the voice of God, warning us of our departure. Do we receive these warnings as Moses received them? We will not conceal from ourselves, that the call to separation falls unnoticed and without significance on the ear of many; they heed not the divine suggestion as they ought to heed it. Certainly they find plausible reasons for their non-attention, but these reasons are precisely what we should seek to know, in order to convince ourselves of

their futility. Many do not heed the summons to depart, because they like not to be reminded of it; they fear departure! The desert in which they must expire, is to them a land flowing with milk and honey; they know no other, they work for no other. They have never, never ascended the mountain in order to behold that glorious land, where the wicked cease from troubling, where the oppressor's voice is not heard, where great and small dwell together in peace, but where also the Lord sits in judgment and weighs the actions of men, according as their hidden motives were for good or for evil. How can those think upon their departure, whom that thought fills with dread? To bid farewell for ever! fearful reflection! they allow it not to rise within them. Rather than hear thus what the Lord declareth unto them, they deceive themselves with vain shows, with the bloom of youth, with the fulness of health. Is there one among you who fears thus to be reminded of his departure? Fearest thou, my friend? Then, indeed hast thou cause to fear. Haste, haste to remove far from thee such cause of apprehension. If the fear has been banished from thy heart, then will thine ear hear more quickly, then will thy reason heed more attentively. But many others cannot hear the voice of God, calling on them to remember: they cannot hear it.

When Elijah waited for the word of the Lord to come unto him, "Behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind was an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earth-

quake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle;"* for the Lord had appeared unto him. A comprehensive word! Loud and violent appeals are not necessary, in order that we should hear the summons of God. The Father speaks in the gentlest tones unto His children. But we must not be stunned or perplexed by other and more audible sounds. The pious hear God's voice in the lisping of the infant: the voice of conscience speaks in whispers. The truly pious man knows well that the voice of God, as it went forth on Mount Sinai, is not more audible to him than the still small voice within. But all voices, in which God's warnings of departure are spoken, are gentle, and cannot be heard when drowned by other and louder sounds. Do you know what are those louder sounds? You do know them. All our passions (by whatever name they may be called) have voices of thunder, and utter their demands in tones as rude as the roar of the whirlwind. If they call, you cannot hear the gentle music of Heaven, you cannot perceive that the Lord appeareth unto you. What voices have envy, avarice, selfishness?—they roar like a lion roaring for his prey. What voices have sensuality and pleasure?—they shriek like the wolf, whose hunger and thirst are unsatiated. Ambition and vanity are scarcely less importunate, for if not restrained within due bounds, all sweet sounds are overpowered by them. I may add, in one word, the voice of the world allows not the Divine call—"Set thy house in order, for to-morrow thou must die," to enter the ear or the heart. The sound

* 1 Kings xix. 11—15.

passes unnoticed by, for you want time and repose sufficient to heed it duly; you are ever occupied in listening to the appeals of the demons I have enumerated; even though apparently silenced, the echo of their rude tones is ever sounding on your ear. Are you, beloved hearers, also a prey to this delusion? Then banish such evils from your heart, from your life, and you will listen to God's summons, that warns you to depart, and your ear will hear the gentle earnest voice that declares "THEN SHALL THE DUST RETURN TO THE EARTH, AS IT WAS, AND THE SPIRIT SHALL RETURN UNTO GOD WHO GAVE IT."*

II. But simply to hear the summons would avail little; to receive it with settled composure, to exercise wise reflection in making provision for the summons, is worth more, and is the second point which we have to consider. To quit a circle in which those live who are dearest to us, and for whom we would have lived and worked for ever: to leave a sphere of action, in which we had bound so many of our brothers and sisters unto us, by benefits of the highest order, must be painful for those whose hearts are as tender, and whose feelings are as deep as were those of our instructor and leader, who was ever ready to perform the greatest sacrifices for the sake of the people entrusted to his guidance. In Moses a father was called away, who desired anxiously to live and strive on for his numerous family, of which so many members were yet infants, needing all a parent's fostering love. You feel, as I do, my friends, that such partings are, indeed, full of pain and sorrow. But how does

* Eccles. xii. 7.

the summons to depart, act upon him? Do you see him overpowered by his feelings? Is he dispirited, discouraged? Do you hear him weep and lament? He pours out his soul in prayer; and that prayer gives us evidence of the holy calm that reigned within. And what is it that presses most upon his heart? What is his supplication? "LET THE LORD THE GOD OF THE SPIRITS OF ALL FLESH, APPOINT A MAN OVER THE CONGREGATION, WHO MAY GO OUT BEFORE THEM, AND WHO MAY GO IN BEFORE THEM, AND WHO MAY LEAD THEM OUT, AND WHO MAY BRING THEM IN, THAT THE CONGREGATION OF THE LORD BE NOT AS SHEEP WHICH HAVE NO SHEPHERD." The children of his people are the objects dearest in life to their faithful leader. What has he not borne and suffered for their sakes? But his love has thence gained in intensity. Fathers and mothers, you know, from experience, that the greater the anxiety your children have caused you, the more numerous the sacrifices that you have made for them, the dearer do they become to you. The anxiety, the cares, the sacrifices, the tears, are the bonds which bind their hearts to your's! And must Moses now quit his dearly beloved children, in ignorance as to who will watch, with a father's eye, over those who stand so much in need of faithful guidance? No! a Moses cannot thus quit life. He would provide for this emergency; a successor must be chosen, who can live, will live, wholly for them, a man who will strive to ensure to them happiness temporal and eternal; therefore he prays unto the Almighty for help, unto Him who is the God of the spirits of all flesh, a God of the spiritual as of the temporal world. Such a man is chosen by the Lord.

Joshua, a man in whom is the spirit, but who presumes not to act according to his own will and caprice, but "who will seek counsel after the judgment of Urim, before the Lord." The holy leader is now satisfied, and places his staff with a joyful heart in Joshua's hands, for he knows that his beloved people will now be affectionately tended and guided. I have endeavoured to make manifest to you, how you should be influenced by the summons to depart. Receive it with calmness, and let not a wise provision be wanting to your children.

You are aware, beloved fathers and mothers, that to you I especially address my discourse; that I think of your sons and daughters, beings entrusted to your care by God, as were all the children of Israel committed by God to the guidance of Moses. Learn from his example, to receive the summons to depart with settled composure, and calmly to deliberate on the arrangements you desire to make on behalf of those belonging to you. Do you act thus, my friends? It cannot be denied that many of you do enjoy this tranquil frame of mind, the natural consequence of which is, that such of you do wisely provide for your children. But can others boast of such wisdom? Do they understand how to provide wisely for their children? Neither can it be denied, that many fathers of families make their last wills long before their demise. This is certainly praiseworthy. But I know not how it happens, my friends, that with all this, there appears to be wanting to us, wise counsel to enable us to make wise wills. Our testaments may be made according to law, and yet not according to justice. My advice is, my dear friends,

let us employ fewer dead letters, but more living words, words of the living God. Let us be less anxious how our accumulated wealth is to be divided among our children, but more anxious that that wealth should be employed usefully, and in a manner acceptable to God; let us have a care that our children live in such a way as to find favour in the eyes of God and men; let us have a care that they remain faithful to the religion of their forefathers, and be not taken in the snares which the wicked spread; let our anxiety be that they shall care for us, their fathers and mothers, even after death has called us hence, and abstain then, as they have previously done, from any action or undertaking, which would have caused us sorrow or disquietude during our lives. Do you know where the model for such a testament may be found? In the sacred writings; King David has furnished us with the outline of such a will: —"MY SON, I GO THE WAY OF ALL THE EARTH: BE THOU STRONG, THEREFORE, AND SHEW THYSELF A MAN; AND KEEP THE CHARGE OF THE LORD THY GOD, TO WALK IN HIS WAYS, TO KEEP HIS STATUTES, AND HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND HIS JUDGMENTS, AND HIS TESTIMONIES, AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES; THAT THOU MAYEST PROSPER IN ALL THOU DOEST, AND WHITHERSOEVER THOU TURNEST THYSELF."* Our text also gives briefly a similar model for our last will, namely, it teaches fathers and mothers, should they be called away early, to bequeath their infant orphans to the guidance of a man in whom lives the Spirit of God; of a man, under whose care they will receive more than

* 1 Kings ii. 1—3.

food, more than clothing, more than instruction in various arts and languages; of a man, "WHO WOULD LEAD THEM OUT AND BRING THEM IN," so, "THAT THEY BE NOT AS SHEEP THAT HAVE NO SHEPHERD." If this spirit do not pervade your last wills, no provision is made for your children, however ample you may deem the means you bequeath to them; they will be beggars amid all their treasures; rich, but not cheerful; fortunate, but not satisfied, not happy, here below. Will God ask you and me, how much we bequeath to our children? If we do not squander our paltry fortune, we shall not hear this enquiry. But He will ask you and me, what are the instructors and instructions, the examples and principles which we bequeathed unto them; He will ask us, who shall lead them out and bring them in, amid the fierce conflicts of life, in order that "they be not as sheep which have no shepherd?" Yea, my beloved friends, verily he will ask this of all of us who still live this day, and who desire to live on in our children, and to influence them beneficially when our existence here is ended. I consider you happy, my friends, if you are wealthy, and can bequeath to your children earthly as well as heavenly riches; but I consider you not less happy, my poor and upright friends, pious fathers and mothers! Can you bequeath nothing to your children? —Nothing! Who shall say this? Do you call your righteousness, and your knowledge of Him on high, who saith unto silver and gold, 'Ye are mine,' do ye call these things, I say, nothing? Provide such jewels for your children, and you will have placed them under the watchful eye of a shepherd, who guideth the young lambs with tender love, and carrieth them in His bosom.

III. Consider the end of our text. The godly man had scarcely received the warning of separation, when "HE DID AS THE LORD COMMANDED HIM, TOOK JOSHUA, AND GAVE HIM A CHARGE" (ויצוהו). The hour had not yet come, when the great leader was to be removed from earth. He subsequently accomplished much, delivered much beautiful instruction, wrote an epitome of the whole law,* and led his people in many important conflicts.† He not only heeded, wisely heeded, the summons for departure, and used it for the benefit of the survivors, but he used it promptly, immediately; he deemed the hour of death at hand, and it must not surprise him. We read of this extraordinary man, that he frequently spoke of his approaching departure in the midst of the people, and reminded them that he should not go in unto that good land, but must die in the wilderness (Deut. iv.). We have, therefore, in conclusion, to take something of great importance to heart; namely, that what we desire to do for the care of our children, we should do without hesitation or delay. We should always think of the parting hour as near at hand, and we should place it before our own minds, and those of our children. We may say, without exaggeration, that 'only a span lies between me and the grave;' while we are occupied with mirth, the angel of death may point his unerring dart at our breasts. Therefore, it is wise, it is our duty, not to suppose that the goal is far off, and not to defer making provisions for those who are dear to us, till the "DAY WHEN THE KEEPERS OF THE HOUSE SHALL TREMBLE,

* משנה תורה. † Deuteronomy.

AND THE STRONG MEN SHALL BOW THEMSELVES, AND THE GRINDERS CEASE, BECAUSE THEY ARE FEW, AND THOSE THAT LOOK OUT OF THE WINDOWS BE DARKENED"* No; he who rejoices in the fulness of life, shall well reflect that our days are measured to a span, that we know not the day on which our earthly pilgrimage shall close; in order that neither maidens and youths in their bloom, nor men and women in the meridian of life, may be surprised by the sudden command to depart, that those who have duties to perform for the care of others, may not delay to fulfil this sacred obligation. The Scripture says of Moses: "AND MOSES WAS AN HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS OLD, AND HIS EYE WAS NOT DIM, NOR HIS NATURAL FORCE ABATED"† Nevertheless, he believed the time of parting to be at hand, and he used the call to separation with alacrity and promptitude. He beheld the land which was to be the inheritance of his people, and took care that it should go well with them therein. We shall ever but imperfectly fulfil our duty in the hour of separation, if we do not, as the godly man Moses did, from time to time, place before our imaginations the parting scene, amid those whom that parting most nearly affects. I say, from time to time; let us choose for this purpose remarkable days, either our birthdays, or the anniversaries of the death of such of our beloved ones as are gone home before us, or of any other important occurrences. Then let us, in the attached circle around our hearths, discourse of the separation, which may be near or yet far off; let us speak of it as of a long journey, on which (though for our and

* Ecclesiastes xii. 3. † Deut. xxiv. 7.

their benefit, our departure may yet be long postponed,) we must one day set forth. We will not speak thus, for the first time, when on the couch of sickness, not when we walk on crutches, and need a support. We may then spare our words, for the couch of sickness, the staff testify sufficiently thereof, though they are orators that make less impression, because their words come not out of the heart. No, we must be ready and vigorous; we must ourselves lead our children to think of the approaching parting, by speaking of that separation. You may perhaps object to me, 'To what do you advise us? Are you afraid that we shall become too happy, and therefore desire, that we should unnecessarily place before our minds, the scenes of sorrow with which life abounds?' This would be a strange objection. Our forefathers did this each evening, ere they sought repose: they forgave all men who had injured them, fearing lest they should be suddenly called, and quit earth in enmity with one of their fellow-men: they confessed their sins to God, that they might be as pure as possible, when they should appear in His presence. Therefore when they waked with each returning day anew to life, and, ere they quitted their couch, they thanked God fervently for this renewed life; therefore were they, I say, far happier with small, than we are with large possessions. No, beloved friends, I fear not lest it should go too well with you, but I fear lest you should not be yet as good, as excellent, as you might become; therefore I would that the remembrance of the parting hour should contribute to your improvement. The reflection that life is soon terminated, should incite you to make straight what has become crooked in your path, should

animate you in the service of your God and of mankind, and teach you to exercise moderation in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. They who have been neglectful of their duties as fathers and husbands, will be deterred by the thought of the approaching separation, from causing further grief to the wife of their youth, and again neglecting their children. Frivolous wives and mothers will be seriously admonished by this thought, to return to their duties, and no longer to be forgetful of those committed to their affections by their God, and from whom they may so speedily be removed. If you speak with your children of this removal, will not these affectionate beings cling more closely to you; will they not twine themselves more firmly around your heart, hold by you more faithfully, so long as your and their existence continues. If there be any among them who cause you anxiety, the parental voice must say to them in this solemn hour, 'I shall soon quit you; O, let me take with me into the grave, into heaven, the blest assurance that I leave behind me purer, happier beings!' I tell you that such a word may work miracles, if it really come from the heart. It will find its place, it will touch the heart, it will wound and heal at the same moment.

You admit that to heed duly the divine summons to departure, to use that summons as a command to provide for our children, and to consider the parting hour as near at hand, must contribute to our moral elevation. But you ask, 'Can we attain to that moral superiority which you here praise in the greatest of all prophets?' My dear friends, how do you know that Moses alone possessed that superiority? In the Bible, and in the history

of the world; many pious men understood and imitated the example given by him. Is not God Himself given unto us for a model, in whose ways we should walk? Then why should we not exercise virtues that have already been exercised by men? Do you ask, 'But how shall we gain that superiority?' I answer, only by being firmly convinced of God, and His parental love. This conviction will produce in you, as it did in Moses, a perfect trust in God. God calleth: therefore there can remain nothing for me to do on earth, or He would not call me hence. 'What will become of those belonging unto me?' The survivors are His, therefore He will care for them when I am removed. He will find a shepherd for the helpless sheep. 'But what will become of me; shall I die—be annihilated?' These are words without meaning. 'I go to my people to be gathered to my fathers, as my brother was gathered before me.' Are not all these great truths ours, as they were his? Will not every one work and strive in this belief?

An apparently more important objection were this:—Moses could look back and forward upon a great work, a work which would be called after his name, and would bless everlastingly. How small in comparison is the sphere of our activity! Can insignificant mortals as we are, leave behind traces of our being, by which posterity will be benefited? Certainly, beloved friends. Let each individual work in his own circle, in proportion to his strength; let each seek to put in practice, in that circle, the great doctrines which Moses taught in his; then may each man look back on his day's work with as much composure as did Moses, and return home with

entire trust unto his Father. Ye benefactors of mankind! can you enumerate how many of your fellow-beings have been rendered happy by one of the useful institutions you have established? Friends and teachers of virtue and religion, can you reckon in how many hearts the blessed seed of piety and truth has sprung up, and borne fruit? Can you tell how far the ray of light sent forth by you into the world has penetrated? Pious fathers and mothers, do you term a small thing all that you have accomplished in your family circles by the exercise of virtue and real piety? Does not one excellent man exalt worlds? Does not the salvation of innumerable beings, proceed from one well-formed, well-trained household? Does not the branch frequently grow into a massy trunk? Look upon these things, and rejoice in the blessings of which you have been the instrument unto your fellow-men. In this manner, it is in the power of every one to accomplish something salutary, and to perpetuate the beneficial influence he has exerted on his kind during life, even unto remote generations, when he shall long since have passed from earth. The just, the wise, the pious man, quits life in this joyful, this blessed assurance. His parting words to those who surround his couch, may with truth be, 'I have sought your happiness with all my heart. I go to my Father, who will be a faithful shepherd unto you.' "HE WILL MAKE YOU LIE DOWN IN FRESH PASTURES, HE WILL LEAD YOU BESIDE THE STILL WATERS." * 'My beloved ones,' will the dying parent then say, 'serve God in truth, serve Him faithfully, keep the Lord before your

* Psalm xxiii.

sight all the days of your life, let Him dwell in your heart for ever and ever. Take heed that you fall not into temptation, that you disobey not His command. Save and help, whenever you have it in your power to render assistance. Thank God, and pray unto Him, that He may guide you in all your ways.' Thus does his pure spirit pass into eternal repose; he closes his earthly life, murmuring in the fulness of hope; Amen, Amen.

THE END.

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